

MUMMY



A
World of
Darkness

Sourcebook for the
Storytelling System including:
VAMPIRE™
THE MASQUERADE

A World of Darkness: Mummy

By Stephan Wieck



*And therefore death is no such terrible enemy, when a man
hath so many attendants about him that can win the combat
of him. Revenge triumphs over death; love slighteth it; honour
aspireth to it; grief flieth to it.*

— Francis Bacon, *Of Death*



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Word From the White Wolf Game Studio

Well, I guess the major issue of the day is the upcoming release of that Werewolf thing. Yes, for both of you who have not heard yet, **Werewolf: The Apocalypse** is due out this summer. In fact, at the very moment this is being written the game is in the last stages of development (thanks, Rob). In no time at all you'll be engaged in globe- and dimension-spanning combat against the vilest creatures of evil (especially those Vampires) as you battle to save the Earth, your tribe and yourself.

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Introduction

The [Great] Pyramid of Cheops was originally no less than four hundred and ninety feet high. Its base covers an area of thirty-one acres... Napoleon once sat down beneath its shadow and calculated — wistfully perhaps — that the mass of stone contained in it would build a wall round France ten feet high and one foot thick. It is estimated that the pyramid in fact contains two million three hundred thousand blocks of stone, each averaging two and a half tons in weight... The exterior casing of the pyramid was a miracle of stonemasonry: the lower courses... are set with joints measuring one ten-thousandth of an inch wide.

— J.E. Manchip White, *Ancient Egypt, Its Culture and History*

There are secrets within secrets. Even to those who see through the veil of the Masquerade and into the World of Darkness, there remains a group of immortals who are largely unknown. Certainly the Vampires of the Camarilla know little of the existence of this obscure group of men and women who have been alive for well over 2,000 years. These mysterious folk are mystics, scribes, architects, tradesmen and warriors. They are all immortal; they are all Mummies.

Born into the ancient kingdom of Egypt during the dawn of human civilization, they have since witnessed every major event of Western history. Through them, all of the wonders of ancient Egypt will come alive in the modern world of your Storytelling campaign.

This sourcebook provides a wealth of information on this new type of Storytelling character. While Vampires see their immortality as something outside of nature, mummies view

themselves as part of the world, with their cycles of life in death providing them with constant invigoration and renewal.

World of Darkness: Mummy supplies you with full details on generating and playing Mummy characters, rules and descriptions of Egyptian sorcery, and an introduction to the spirit world which Mummies visit in their mystic cycle of death and rebirth. Plus the sourcebook contains Storyteller information such as game history, pregenerated Mummy characters (including details on Bane Mummies), and a feature Story to introduce the material to your campaign world.

By itself, this sourcebook does not contain all of the game rules necessary to run a campaign world. **Mummy** is intended to be used in conjunction with any Storytelling game(s) such as **Vampire: the Masquerade** and **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**, making your campaign world more exciting and diversified for your troupe.



Chapter One: The Mummy

*Angel or Devil
I was thirsty
And you wet my lips*

— U2, *Trip Through Your Wire*

Before I begin my story, let me briefly introduce my own mortal beginning. I became a Vampire at age 24 in August of 1927. As a youth, I was something of a louse, uneducated and almost Brujah in my rebelliousness and rashness. I was a product of my times, and what times they were. The "Roaring '20s" is what these modern American generations call my early years.

The times filled my life with excess and glamour. I thought myself a true creature of earthly passions — that is, until my master came calling that night in August and I learned what it really meant to feel pleasure and to hunger for passion.

It was a little after midnight; I remember the time precisely. I had just returned one of my girls, Julie, to her parents' house, and her father had been quick to point out the eight-minute discrepancy between his watch and Julie's midnight curfew. I told him that if Julie would learn to dress faster, I could get her home on time. Like I said, I was something of a scoundrel in my mortal years. I ran away while the old man began a tantrum that must have ended in a coronary.

Maybe it was the yelling of Julie's father that attracted my master's attention. Who's to say? I think, though, that it was because I stopped to take a bottle of whiskey from an unconscious vagrant on my way home that I became evil enough to be prey. A little theft, a small sin, but it was an abuse of power against someone in a lower station of life.

The Embrace was quite rough. I remember a vise closing over my shoulder and his teeth slashing into my throat. It was magical. The surrender. The exquisite suicide of giving in to him. You have felt it; you know words cannot encompass that experience.

Afterwards, while consciousness faded from me, I looked up at him. He didn't appear so magical then, no angel of mercy or devil in mortal guise; just a man standing in the alley, a murderer. So I asked him, probably telepathically since my throat was tattered flesh, "What gives you the right?"

In response, he finished the Kiss and gave me eternal life. Now, don't get the wrong impression. It wasn't guilt that motivated him. My question had struck no chord of mercy in his cold and vestigial heart. Rather, I believe he wanted me to become as he was and see for myself what gave him the right — what gives all of our kind the right.

Quite a monster he was, and not much of a mentor. That fact and my previously rough and loose mortal life made me quite a terror of vampiric infancy. I was rebellious to the Camarilla, and I broke from my master early, never joining the Sect and constantly maintaining my own counsel.

I give you this brief personal background to help you understand my state of mind when I first met the man named Sahura. I had moved to Chicago, where the street feeding was easy. It was almost New Year's Eve in 1933, the midst of the



Depression, and the people had little hope for 1934. I was mirroring their sorrow, as our kind often does, when I chanced to spy a well-dressed man walking the streets of downtown shortly after dark.

The man was accosted by a beggar who grabbed the gentleman's coat and pleaded, "A few pennies for a poor man?"

The gentleman pushed the beggar aside and paid the poor man only a litany of curses. Seeing the beggar thoroughly intimidated, the man turned and continued up the street without another glance.

What fun! To find a mortal so wrapped up in himself that he takes no time for his fellow humans. I immediately assumed the role of avenger and prowled after the heartless one.

I followed him silently for several blocks until he finally turned into an abandoned meat factory. Once inside, he began to pace a circle near the door, smoking a cigarette. He stopped pacing briefly to check a revolver in his coat pocket.

I taunted him from the shadows, mimicking the beggar's voice, "A few pennies for a poor man?"

He turned about to face the voice, peering into the shadows where I hid. "Who's there?" he called in an urgent whisper.

I circled about him and called again. "A few pennies for a poor man?"

The mortal became afraid. He brandished the pistol, waving it in the air and yelling threats. He was making far too much noise, so I crept behind him and ended his life.

I was lost in the reverie of the feast and barely noticed another man enter the factory. This new individual was also well-dressed but in clothes slightly out of fashion. He was short and dark-complexioned, obviously of foreign stock.

While I considered whether to kill him or not, he spoke to me, quite calmly considering the bloody scene before him. "Quite a sad need your kind endures," he said.

My friendship with Sahura had begun. He removed an Egyptian relic off of the freshly dead man — a museum thief — and asked me back to his house. I was wary, but meeting a man who knew of the Masquerade was a tempting curiosity, and he drove us to a large brownstone on the city's north side.

The interior of Sahura's home was remarkable, especially to my unworldly mind. Every room seemed filled with artifacts of antiquity, a collection of artifacts rivaling most museums, but the house's treasures were laid out for casual comfort and use, not locked in cases of glass. Each room reflected a specific time and place: a study from Renaissance France, a dining room from medieval England, a bedroom of Asian luxury and so forth for the entire house.

Sahura let me peruse the building slowly, offering no commentary and guiding me past a number of closed doors. When he finished showing me his home, he invited me into the Persian living room. As we entered the room, several servants replaced Sahura's overcoat with a smoking jacket

and provided him tea. He offered me a seat and took one himself. I sat down, watching the servants carefully. They were like ghosts, their bodies translucent and their white-slipped feet floating above the woven carpet.

"My given name is Sahura. I was born somewhere along the bank of the Nile around 2600 B.C., during the reign of Pharaoh Khufu, also called Cheops in current history books. Since then, I have died and been reborn no less than 25 times."

"What?" I looked at him incredulously. "You've lived 25 times? And here I thought reincarnation was just some vain mortal hope."

Sahura flashed me a patronizing smile. "Not reincarnation. I've kept the same body throughout all of my lives. When I was dying for the very first time, I was honored for my lifetime of paintings by being given an extraordinary burial rite. For reasons I still do not understand, the spells cast upon me to protect and guide me in the afterworld instead gave me immortality. My Ba, the part of me Christians might call my soul, wandered the spirit worlds, forbidden to pass up into the true realms of Elysium. My earthbound Ka, a shade of my soul your culture calls ghosts, remained on this world to protect my corporeal remains. Eventually, my souls were rejuvenated, and I was able to reenter my physical shell to live once more. Thus began my second life."



My skepticism was waning. Sahura had a serene and honest composure which did not lend itself to deceit, plus the phantom servants were enough proof that I was dealing with things outside my normal, rational view of reality (which, I realize, is odd coming from a Vampire). "You mean to tell me that you came back from the dead," I declared.

"That's not entirely true. It depends on what you call death. It's a very misunderstood phenomenon in your culture and throughout the world today. My physical body died from disease, but my souls did not pass on into the true spirit realms of the dead. There are many spirit worlds, but there are places where only the dead may go. Places which are still a mystery to me."

"How did you come back?"

"Well, that's a rather involved process. Suffice to say that there are ways that the Ba and Ka can reform the physical shell and reenter it. It was a great advantage to return to a body that had been wonderfully embalmed and preserved."

"Who gave you this power?" I asked, my voice rising. "You said they gave it to you because you were an artist? Are there more like you out there?"

"Calm down, my friend, we have plenty of time to learn about one another. To answer one of your questions, there are 43 of us who are immortal in a manner such as myself — travelers through time, making our mark in certain episodes of history."

"Each of us received a ritual of burial upon our first death similar to my embalming rights. Similar, but not the same. A few are cursed to a fate beyond my want to imagine, but those are, fortunately, a minority. Most of us have been enjoying our immortal existence for several thousand years, thanks to the necromancy of Isis and Anubis. The particulars of my origin I will save, perhaps for another time."

"Allow me to turn the tables and ask you to introduce yourself. I first ran across your kind in Constantinople. The lady I met there was most fascinating and alluring. We maintained a casual friendship for about a hundred years, but since she died, I have only seen your kind sporadically. I would like to know what has become of your lot."

A World of Darkness: Mummy

This supplement presents the Mummy character as an addition to the Storytelling world of *Vampire*, *Werewolf* and other games. All of the characters presented in Storytelling games are meant to blend into a unique game world geared toward emotionally intense stories. Ultimately, the degree you wish to integrate the different character types into your own game world is solely up to you and your group.

Character Creation Outline

Step One: Character Concept:

Who are you?

- Identify Concept: Who were you, what have you become?
- Choose Occupation: How did you define yourself before becoming a Mummy?
- Choose Nature and Demeanor (Optional): What is your personality?

Step Two: Select Attributes:

What are your basic capabilities?

Prioritize your three categories:

Primary 7, Secondary 5, Tertiary 3

- Choose Physical Traits: Strength, Stamina & Dexterity
- Choose Social Traits: Charisma, Manipulation & Appearance
- Choose Mental Traits: Perception, Intelligence & Wits

Step Three: Select Abilities:

What do you know?

Prioritize your three categories:

Primary 20, Secondary 15, Tertiary 10

- Choose Talents: Your innate, intuitive Abilities
- Choose Skills: Your trained Abilities
- Choose Knowledges: Abilities you study and memorize

Step Four: Select Advantages:

In what ways are you unique?

- Choose Magical Skills: Limited by occupation
- Choose Background Traits: May be limited by Chronicle concept (6)
- Choose Virtues: Conscience, Self-Control, Courage, Honor, Love & Truth (10)

Step Five: Last Touches:

Filling in the all-important details

- Record base Willpower = your Courage rating
- Record base Sekhem = Occupation Magic Skill x 10
- Record Ba = result of a single die roll
- Record Ka = 5
- Spend your 30 Freebie points on occupation and to raise any trait
- Acquire base spells according to rules in Chapter Two

This chapter describes how to create a Mummy character. Storytellers can decide for themselves to what extent they want to integrate Mummies into their campaign (solely as figures for the characters to meet or as personae the players may take on).

Character Generation

Like most "rules" sections of this book, the character generation procedure presented in this chapter is meant to be only a guide. All the Storytelling games stress rule flexibility. In that spirit, please treat the procedure below as a rough outline and feel free to make your own way. If the system below does not allow you enough points to be an able musician, and the character you envision was teaching Nero the strings while Rome burned, bend the rules and give yourself a few points. By the same token, look for areas where your character really might not be as strong as the rules mandate. Maybe she never studied much Magic, or maybe she never bothered to build up the resources that give her Background.

Only one hard-and-fast rule should always be used: when the concept of the character you want to play conflicts with the rules, scrap the rules, not your concept. Keep in mind, however, that characters who are all-powerful are not a challenge to play, nor do they provide for a fun campaign. Most ancient cultures, the Egyptians included, had gods who were wracked with human weaknesses. Also, most of the humor in your campaign will come from the times when your character screws up — just like in real life. Discipline your desires when you create your character, and you will find that you have more fun in the long run.

Identity

*Oh! Breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade
Where cold and unhonour'd his relics are laid.*

— Thomas Moore, *Oh! Breathe Not His Name*

The ancient Egyptians took great stock in names. When a new Pharaoh ascended to power, he bore not one but five different names as part of his title. Even common folk had multiple names, though their titles were not as grand as a Pharaoh's. The Egyptians held to the belief that if a person's name was not perpetuated after his death, the individual would no longer exist. Therefore, most Pharaohs liked to have their names scribbled on everything in sight.

Egyptian magic in particular held that knowing a thing's true name gave the magician mastery over it. There is a myth involving Isis and Ra wherein the goddess goes to elaborate lengths to force Ra to divulge his true name to her, thereby giving Isis power over him.

This multiplicity of names, combined with **Mummy** characters having lived through dozens of lifetimes, creates some confusion as to what to call these people when you meet them. On the character sheet there is room for three names.

Current Name — The name or pseudonym the character currently goes by. If the character lives in Kansas, he might not get away with calling himself Tchatcha-em-anh without attracting a little attention.

Known Name — This is the name that the character was known by in her first life. It is also the name that most other Mummies will call the character if they should meet. Examples are **Sahura** or **Ramses**.

True Name — This is the secret name which is an integral part of the character's being. To divulge it to even a dear friend is a great leap of faith and trust. To divulge it to a magician knowledgeable in **Hekau** (see **Magic**) is suicide. A player may not even wish to write his True Name on his character sheet.

The next items on the character sheet are **Nature** and **Demeanor**. **Nature** represents the character's innermost drive and philosophy. It is a long-lasting description of the character's belief structure. **Nature** is very important to the theme of **Mummy**, as will be discussed later.

Demeanor is the surface personality of the character. **Demeanor** can change many times, depending on the environment in which the character finds herself. Changing **Demeanors** represents the subtly different personalities people use to interact with different social groups or handle different kinds of situational stress. **Demeanor** can change as often as the player and Storyteller decide, but it usually fluctuates between two or three different patterns which the character habitually adopts.

The **Vampire** rulebook contains a full listing of **Archetypes** from which the player can choose her **Nature** and **Demeanor**.

Birthyear can be anywhere from 3500 B.C. to 1 B.C. This time span can be broadened somewhat, if the Storyteller and player agree on the circumstances (e.g. a medieval cult revived the mummification ritual and somehow succeeded in performing it correctly once in A.D. 855).

Apparent Age is the age of the character when she died. This will be the age of the character's immortal body forever more.

Chronicle is the name of the Storyteller's Chronicle, or alternately, the name or even the theme of the current story. Some players enjoy writing the theme of the current story on the sheet somewhere to remind themselves of the story's emotional focus.

Occupations

Under **Occupation**, the player should list her character's occupation during that character's original Egyptian lifetime. Below is a list of some of the possibilities. Next to each occupation is a short list of the **Attributes**, **Abilities** and other **Advantages** which the player may want to consider as starting points for developing the character. Keep in mind that Mummies have lived through a score of lifetimes and their collection of **Attributes**, **Abilities** and **Advantages** really does not depend on their first lifetime's occupation. **Occupation** is simply a good starting point for developing the character; it should not limit the development of the character.

Occupation does affect the amount of **Magic Skill** the character possesses. It will also affect how other Mummies look upon the character. Ancient Egyptian culture had a stratified social structure and Mummies see one another in terms of their first life personae, no matter how much the individual has changed through the ages.

Along with each **Occupation**, there is a **Freebie** point cost, which the character will pay at the end of character generation.





Architect

Attributes: Mental

Abilities: Carpentry, Construction, Demolitions, Architecture, Astronomy, Engineering, Geology, Mathematics, Physics

Magic Skill Points: 2

Freebie Cost: 7

Artist

Attributes: Mental

Abilities: Artistic Expression, Empathy, Forgery, Jeweler, Music, Pottery, Scribing, Art History, Theology

Magic Skill Points: 3

Freebie Cost: 9

Beggar

Attributes: Social

Abilities: Acting, Brawl, Intimidation, Mimicry, Poetic Expression, Scrounging, Singing, Streetwise, Trick, Brewing/Distilling, Carousing, Fast-Talk, Gambling, Lock Picking, Pick Pocket, Public Speaking, Area Knowledge

Magic Skill Points: 1

Freebie Cost: 4

Craftsman

Attributes: Physical

Abilities: Instruction, Blacksmith, Carpentry, Cooking, Haggling, Jeweler, Leatherworking, Pottery, Metallurgy

Magic Skill Points: 2

Freebie Cost: 7

Doctor

Attributes: Mental

Abilities: First-Aid, Herbalism, Hypnotism, Research, Alchemy, Biology, Chemistry, Medicine, Psychology, Thanatology

Magic Skill Points: 5

Freebie Cost: 13

Farmer

Attributes: Physical

Abilities: Animal Ken, Animal Training, Brewing/Distilling, Carpentry, Herbalism, Survival, Tracking, Traps, Biology (flora/agriculture)

Magic Skill Points: 1

Freebie Cost: 4

Merchant

Attributes: Social

Abilities: Acting, Alertness, Diplomacy, Intrigue, Sense Deception, Bribery, Carousing, Etiquette, Fast-Talk, Gambling, Haggling, Sleight of Hand, Speed Reading, Accounting, Area Knowledge, Bureaucracy, Economics, Finance, Linguistics, Politics

Magic Skill Points: 2

Freebie Cost: 7

Magician

Attributes: Mental

Abilities: Intimidation, Search, Singing, Animal Ken, Herbalism, Meditation, Orienteering, Research, Scribing, Speed Reading, Alchemy, Astrology, Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Faerie Lore, Magus Lore, Metallurgy, Meteorology, Naturalist, Occult, Spirit Lore

Magic Skill Points: 6

Freebie Cost: 15

Pharaoh

Attributes: Social

Abilities: Animal Ken, Diplomacy, Intrigue, Leadership, Seduction, Sense Deception, Carousing, Drive (chariot), Etiquette, Hunting, Melee, Public Speaking, Ride, Style, Throwing, Tracking, Astrology, Bureaucracy, Economics, History, Law, Politics, Theology

Magic Skill Points: 4

Freebie Cost: 12

Priest

Attributes: Social

Abilities: Animal Ken, Diplomacy, Bribery, Cooking, Etiquette, Haggling, Herbalism, Meditation, Music, Public Speaking, Astrology, Cryptography, Law, Meteorology, Spirit Lore, Thanatology, Theology

Magic Skill Points: 4

Freebie Cost: 11

Sailor/Fisherman

Attributes: Physical

Abilities: Athletics, Brawl, Search, Seduction, Streetwise, Acrobatics, Boat Handling, Carousing, Climbing, Cooking, Fishing, Gambling, Melee, Orienteering, Repair, Swimming, Astrology, Astronomy, Meteorology

Magic Skill Points: 2

Freebie Cost: 6

Warrior

Attributes: Physical

Abilities: Alertness, Athletics, Brawl, Diplomacy, Dodge, Instruction, Intimidation, Leadership, Trick, Animal Training, Archery, Drive (chariot), First Aid, Gambling, Melee, Stealth, Survival, Throwing, Bureaucracy, Politics

Magic Skill Points: 2

Freebie Cost: 7

Attributes

Attributes measure your character's essential components of being: his physical, social and mental make-up. They determine how strong, smart and handsome he is (or how weak, dull-witted and crude).

Attributes are grouped into three main categories: Physical, Social, and Mental. Under each area is a list of three Attributes. Next to each Attribute is a line of eight circles which you can darken in with a pencil to show the magnitude of development the character possesses in that Attribute. One darkened circle next to an Attribute represents inferior development in that area, whereas five circles represents the maximum development a normal mortal could possibly develop. It is possible through Egyptian sorcery for the character to attain Attributes above 5, vaulting her into the realm of the superhuman.

The first circle in each Attribute is free for each character, but more must be bought. This represents the fact that every character has at least some development in every Attribute (actually, this isn't quite true, but the exceptions come later). Don't get excited yet though, one circle is awfully poor. Your character is still a butt-ugly imbecile. You'll get to improve him in a second, but first a brief description of exactly what each Attribute represents is in order.

Physical

Strength — Are you a girlie man or is Arnold too embarrassed to flex when you're around? Actually, Strength does not necessarily imply a well-defined physique. It is a measure of the character's muscle power output — her ability to lift weight and move heavy objects. In physical confrontations, it also determines how hard the character can hit.

Dexterity — This attribute is a measure of muscular integration, reflexes and finesse of movement. Does the character move gracefully and have the hands of a surgeon, or is a cold the only thing he can catch? Dexterity determines the character's ability in many feats of athletics as well as his ability to use tools (including many weapons).

Stamina — Stamina is a measure of the character's muscular endurance and general health. Stamina also determines the character's resistance to physical harm.

Social

Charisma — This Attribute covers innumerable intangibles of human interaction such as body language, facial expression, dynamic personality, voice inflection, etc. Charisma powers social interactions with first introductions and casual acquaintances. It represents the character's ability to make others like him. Charisma can be used to begin a sincere friendship or equally well to deceive. Salesmen and leaders such as Hitler rely on Charisma to succeed.

Manipulation — Although Manipulation normally carries connotations of ill will, a character can utilize his ability to manipulate other people in both good and bad ways. Manipulation represents the character's ability to get other people to do things. Manipulation would be used in situations as varied as fast-talking an old lady out of a buck to convincing a psychiatric patient to face reality.

Appearance — Pure physical beauty; never to be underestimated as a means of getting what you want through other people, it only goes so far. Prolonged relationships usually require more than beauty. Models and many celebrities rely on Appearance for success.

Mental

Perception — This attribute is a measure of mental awareness and concentration. High perception allows the character to successfully utilize her knowledge to identify a situation or draw a connection between seemingly unrelated clues. Are you Sherlock Holmes or Inspector Gadget?

Intelligence — Try to remember the faces and names in your third-grade class. Stop reading for a minute and try to think of your teacher and all your friends from third grade.

Any luck? How's your memory? Now imagine that you have been alive for a long time and third grade was 3,000 years ago. How's your memory now?

Simply remembering their past experiences and acquaintances is a monumental task for Mummy characters. The skills and knowledge built up over so many lives can easily be forgotten without a good memory. The Intelligence Attribute is vital to Mummy characters since it measures the character's memory. A character with an Intelligence of one has a brain like a sieve, while an Intelligence of five is nearly eidetic. However, even an Intelligence of five does not insure retention of all past experiences since the death-rebirth cycle has a slightly amnesiac effect (to be discussed in more depth later).

The other side of the Intelligence Attribute is no less important. It represents the character's pure intellect, and is vital to successful application of many Knowledge Abilities.

Wits — Wits represents the character's mental agility. Is she a quick thinker or dull-witted? Wits could also be called common sense or wisdom. Characters with a low rating in Wits may be headstrong or stubborn, while high ratings in Wits shows a more serene wisdom.

Assigning Points

For character generation, you should rank the three Attribute categories in order of the character's development in each area. As an example, if your character conception is a burly, gruff man who used to be a foreman on pyramid construction, you might rank his Attribute categories as Physical first, Mental second and Social last.

Once you have ranked the categories, all characters have 7 points to divide up between the three Attributes in your primary category, 5 points in your second most important category, and 3 points in your weakest category. Your only restriction on spending is that no Attribute can be raised above five — the human limit.

In our foreman example, you might spend his attribute points in the following way: Physical (+4 Strength, +2 Stamina, and +1 Dexterity = 7 extra points), Mental (+2 Perception, +2 Intelligence, +1 Wits = 5 extra points), and Social (+2 Manipulation, +1 Appearance, +0 Charisma = 3 extra points). These extra points are added on to the rating of 1 which your character automatically received in each Attribute. By allotting the points, you determine the strengths and weaknesses of the character's persona.

Abilities

Abilities represent the fields of human endeavor — what people do. A character's rating in an Ability represents his proficiency in that area, whether it be singing, karate or architecture.

Abilities are divided into Talents, Skills and Knowledges. Talents are intuitive Abilities which everyone possesses in some measure. They are instinctive and experiential, and thus difficult or impossible to improve by practice or study. Talents are developed through use and experience. Skills include Abilities which are learned through training and usually involve physical applications. Knowledge abilities are more cerebral and include academic subjects and learned expertises.

Mummy characters, by virtue of their incredibly long lives, have had the opportunity to excel in many Abilities. Those who have continued to learn and grow with history will be storehouses of information and skill. The sole limiting factor on the character's depth of ability is his memory, as represented by the character's Intelligence attribute. Like Attributes, to assign ratings in Abilities, the player must first rank the three categories of Abilities: Talents, Skills and Knowledges. The player may then spend 20 points on Abilities in the primary area, 15 in the second and 10 in the third. Our pyramid foreman may choose to spend 20 in Skills, 15 in Knowledges and 10 in Talents.

The points are spent one for one to get ratings in Abilities. A listing and full description of Abilities, divided into Talents, Skills, and Knowledges, is provided in the *Vampire* rulebook. The list is expanded in *The Players Guide*. Several new Secondary Abilities are included below.

Your character's Intelligence Attribute plays two roles in determining Abilities. First, you may only put points into Abilities up to a rating equal to your character's Intelligence rating, unless it is an Ability which your character would have learned or developed in her current lifetime. When Mummies pass through their spirit phase and are "reborn" into their physical bodies, they suffer some amnesiac effects. To varying degrees depending on their Intelligence, characters forget the detailed knowledge that makes them experts in Abilities. The exceptions to this rule are skills that the character has developed or relearned during his current life. What skills can be included in this area depend on the character's history that the player develops. The Storyteller should arbitrate the use of this rule.

For example, our pyramid foreman has an Intelligence of 3, representing an above average memory. He has spent his Ability points between Skills, Knowledges and Talents, and now must look at the effects of Intelligence on his Ability selections. He has two Abilities with ratings above his Intelligence Attribute: 5 points in the Construction skill and 4 points in the Architecture knowledge. He checks with the Storyteller, and they agree that since he has resumed work in the construction trade during his current life, the rating of 5 in that skill is okay. However, since he has yet to learn much

English and has lived in the USA, chances are he hasn't restudied his architecture. Therefore he drops the fourth point in architecture and responds it in another knowledge.

New Secondary Talents

Animal Empathy: Animal Empathy is a Talent which measures a character's innate ability to relate to animals. At lower levels of ability, the character will be able to accurately gauge an animal's disposition (i.e. angry, playful, hungry) and then can react accordingly. With increasing ability, the character can almost mystically commune with the animal to subtly change its behavior.

Ancient Egyptians were known for keeping exotic pets, including cats, baboons, birds, and crocodiles. Pharaoh Ramses II was said to have trained tigers which went with him into combat.

- Novice: Been to the zoo.
- Practiced: Loves pets.
- Competent: Veteran mailman.
- Expert: Animals' best friend
- Master: Lord of the Jungle

Trick: This is a talent for tomfoolery. Everyone from jesters to con men utilize the Trick Talent to ply their trade. It measures a character's general ability to pull off stunts of



deception, and more specifically governs such things as keeping a poker face, lying convincingly, and knowing how to set up physical props and/or people to pull off such stunts.

- Novice: Prankster
- Practiced: Good for winning bar bets
- Competent: Grifter
- Expert: Con Man
- Master: Professional Sting Man

Writing: This talent covers the character's innate ability to write prose. It is a combination of the character's style, organization and pure ability to entertain or captivate. Whether the work is a mammoth piece of literature or a short article for the newspaper, the character's Writing talent is the driving force for the creation.

- Novice: Thinks about writing
- Practiced: Sold a few pieces
- Competent: Freelance work in demand
- Expert: Pulitzer Contender
- Master: Destined for Nobel Prize

New Secondary Skills

Construction: This skill covers the competencies required in the building construction trade. Laying concrete foundations, welding, masonry and riveting, as well as operation of heavy construction machinery, are all included in this skill. The character may specialize in buildings, tunnels, bridges, roads, etc. At higher levels, the character also has a working knowledge of many engineering and architectural concepts.

- Novice: Summer work
- Practiced: Apprentice
- Competent: Tradesman
- Expert: Site Foreman
- Master: Organized major projects

Scribing: The skill of scribing includes calligraphy, shorthand, hieroglyphics and other forms of penmanship. The skill is rapidly fading from importance, as new tools replace the need for manually drafted or copied documents, but the skill does still exist, having become more of an art form than a professional service.

- Novice: Can write neatly
- Practiced: Knows some calligraphy
- Competent: Master of styles and fonts
- Expert: Able to render clear pictograms
- Master: Has restored the splendor and majesty of penmanship



New Secondary Knowledge

Thanatology: Thanatology is an exotic knowledge area which involves the study of death. It covers quite a wide range of areas including spiritual phenomenon, physical aging, life-after-death experiences and medical causes of death. Researchers of thanatology all take different slants on the topic, but their end goal is to understand what happens when we die. Thanatology is an important knowledge area for Mummy characters, since it also includes the study of embalming and other death rituals.

- Novice: Curious reader
- Practiced: Some background study
- Competent: Spiritual investigator or philosophy professor
- Expert: True mystic or autopsy MD.
- Master: Knows the secrets??

Advantages

Now it's time for some fun. Advantages cover all of the miscellaneous items that round out the character and make her an extraordinary and mystical being.

The first advantage is Magic Skills. Ancient Egyptians have left the world a tremendous legacy of magic and superstition. Even in their own time, the Egyptians were renowned amongst other civilizations for being a very superstitious people. The Greek historians in particular recorded many of the odd mannerisms and beliefs of the Egyptians.

The use of magic and the Egyptian beliefs in it are covered in more detail in the Magic chapter of this book. Players who are considering characters with significant Magical expertise will want to consult that chapter before firmly deciding which Magic Skills to select.

The player may take as many points in the various Magic Skills as is listed under his character's chosen Occupation. The character's first occupation largely determines his magical ability, because the character's first life was practically his sole opportunity to learn the skills and enchantments of ancient Egypt. The only other chances he would have are either living additional lifetimes in ancient Egypt, or learning skills from other Mummies. Note that hermetic magic, practiced by Magi, is an entirely different sort of magic which is more in line with Tremere Clan incantations. Mummy Magic Skills and the magic used by Magi and Tremere draw upon similar forces but are entirely different skills.

If the player selects an Occupation which is not listed, the Storyteller should assign the number of points the player may spend. Like Abilities, the points are spent on a one-for-one basis to raise any skills the player selects. There are no memory limits or bonuses on selecting Magic Skills. The only free Magic Skill is one point in Necromancy which every Mummy character has and which every character lives and dies by.

Magic Skills

Below is a brief description of each skill. Refer to the Magic chapter for more detail.

Alchemy — Not just the Knowledge Ability of the unaware, alchemy is the true knowledge of manufacturing potions and ointments for an incredible variety of uses.

Amulets — Those few who possess this skill are able to trap the forces of magic and imprison them in physical items. She who possesses the item and knows its true nature can wield those forces.

Celestial — At once the most powerful and weakest of Magic Skills. A Master of the stars and their alignments is able to work huge feats of magic, affecting weather and natural phenomena on a global scale.

Figurines — Ancient Egyptians well knew the methods by which statues and carvings could be made to take on the life of that which they represent. Masters of this skill are never without allies or servants.

Hekau — The power of true names is the power to command.

Necromancy — A Magic Skill most revered in ancient Egypt. Necromancy includes rituals to safeguard the dead to the eternal realms, incantations for contacting the spirit world, plus a host of nasty, dirty, darker magic.

Experience

The next Advantage is Experience. This space is used for recording how many points of experience the character has accumulated but not used. The Storyteller usually rewards characters with experience at the end of a game session or a Story. Guidelines for giving and using experience are provided in *Vampire*. Provided is a list of experience costs for raising Mummy character's stats.

More than mere experience is necessary to advance in magic. Spending the required experience is the last step; first the character must seek out an able teacher from whom she can learn. See the Magic chapter for more details on learning Magic Skills and spells.

The Soul

The ancient Egyptians did not share the Judeo-Christian belief in the human soul. One soul was far too simple a concept for the superstitious Egyptians. They believed living beings had no less than nine parts to their bodies and souls. Historians differ slightly in interpreting the exact beliefs of the Egyptians in regard to all these metaphysical parts, but for game purposes they are defined in Chapter Three. For now, just consider Sekhem, Ba and Ka.

Sekhem represents the character's personal life force and capacity to power sorcery. Newly created characters begin with a Sekhem rating equal to the number of Magic Skill points received from his Occupation multiplied by 10. For example, a doctor would receive $5 \times 10 = 50$ points of Sekhem during character generation. Write the number in the box next to Sekhem on the character sheet, and also bubble this same number in the current score Sekhem track (Suggestion: To avoid wearing a hole in your character sheet with your eraser during the course of play, you may wish to attach a 3x5 index card and record your character's current Sekhem on it). A character may never raise his maximum Sekhem score above 99.

Ba is a part of a character's soul. Mummies gradually deplete their Ba force while living, and regenerate it during their dead seasons. Players roll a die for their character's beginning Ba score. A 10 indicates the character has just woken after a long sleep, while a low score indicates the character will soon be lying down for a little pseudo-eternal rest.

Ka is the part of the character's being which becomes her earthbound ghost when she is dead. A character begins with a Ka rating of 5.

Willpower

Experienced *Vampire* gamers well know the importance of the next Advantage, Willpower. It is a measure of the character's resolve in the face of adversity. Players track both

Type of Trait	Cost
Sekhem	1
New Ability	3
Willpower	current rating
Virtue	current rating
Ability	current rating x 2
Ba	not applicable
Ka	current rating
Attribute	current rating x 4
Magic Skills	current rating x 5
New Magic	Skill 7
New Spell	spell's difficulty number

Notes: Attributes can only be raised up to five using experience. Mummy characters require magic to push their Attributes into supernatural ranges.

the character's maximum Willpower rating (in the squares) as well as the character's current Willpower (in the circles). As a story progresses, the character's mental determination will be tested by adversity, requiring her to persevere to her goal. This is reflected by the current Willpower rating, which the player spends throughout the story; it is only replenished when the character accomplishes feats that renew his sense of direction (see Nature and Demeanor in *Vampire*).

A Mummy character's starting Willpower is equal to his starting value in the Courage Virtue. The player may wish to increase the score using Freebie points at the end of character generation. Note that this determines the character's maximum Willpower as well as his current Willpower at the beginning of his first Story.

Backgrounds

Backgrounds are special resources available to the character, representing such things as temporal power and connections in mortal society. Mummy characters have 6 points to spend in choosing Backgrounds. The following Backgrounds are open to them, and a full explanation of most of these Backgrounds can be found in the *Vampire* rulebook.

Allies

Allies are friends and family who will support the character in casual and indirect ways, providing lodging or small favors. Calling on them to risk their lives or lifestyles is usually beyond the character's relationship with them. Many Mummies maintain contact with members of their extended family trees, including some of the Mummy's descendants. These huge family trees can be widespread support organizations for the character (depending on how many Background

points the player forks over for it). Usually the character will present herself as a distant cousin to maintain the secret of her immortality.

Contacts

The character knows people in key places. The relationship is not necessarily friendly, but the character can usually coax or coerce information from his Contacts.

Fame

A blessing and a curse for Mummies, just like Vampires.

Influence

Influence is indirect temporal power. The character has connections in high places of government or business, or at least relatively high places depending on the character's score.

Retainers

While dedicated servants are a great boon to Vampires, Mummies are not quite so dependent on. They are, however, of great help to Mummies in caring for the character's physical assets (both financial and corporeal) while she is dead. Many Mummies start making good friends when their Ba starts getting low.

Status

Since there are no organizations such as the Camarilla or Clans binding Mummies together, a Mummy character's Status among his peers may appear to be less of a resource than it is to Vampire characters. However, while Mummies typically maintain loose contact with one another, they do stay aware of each other's general whereabouts and condition. There is a strong sense of companionship and fraternity among the Mummies, and Mummy characters who are respected among their peers (high Status) can expect some favors. Aid from other Mummies is especially helpful while the character lies in her death state to protect her body, as well as when she is reborn and desires some financial assistance to regain her preferred lifestyle or educational help to catch up with the times. Of course, to maintain their Status ratings, characters are expected to conduct themselves well and reciprocate the favors.

When deciding a character's Status, the player should consider the character's initial Occupation. The character's social class in his first life forms his first impression on other Mummies, and they will tend to always treat him with the appropriate level of respect. Exceptions certainly occur in both directions — falling from grace or proving to be a wise and true eternal confidant despite lowly beginnings will influence almost anyone.

Supernatural

Mummies come from a superstitious society and many are themselves accomplished magicians. They do not lead their lives dismissing and rationalizing away bizarre sightings and phenomena as do many mortals in the modern world. With such a perspective, Mummies have come to discover and become very familiar with many of the supernatural elements which are active in the world.

By assigning points to the Supernatural Background, the character may select one acquaintance who is either Vampire, Lupine, Magus, Ghost or even a Faerie. At the Storyteller's discretion, players may also select other supernatural entities such as psychics and elementals with which the character has developed a relationship contact. Bane Mummies may have Demon Supernatural contacts.

The player and Storyteller should develop and define each Supernatural contact, just as under the Contact Background. One point should allow for the character to know and be known by a supernatural being, while more points can increase the power of the being known or the closeness of their relationship.

This can be an incredibly potent resource to the character if the Storyteller chooses to allow the contact to be a powerful individual (a 2,000 year old Vampire the Mummy met in ancient Rome). Supernatural contacts also provide a cohesive method of maintaining contact between two characters.

Virtues

Virtues describe aspects of the character's morality, values and basic personality. They are therefore an important Advantage in defining the character for roleplaying. Every character starts with a score of one in all Virtues. The player may then elect to spend up to 10 dots to raise his beginning Virtues.

Vampire presented three Virtues — Conscience, Self-Control and Courage — which are described in detail in the rulebook. Mummy characters may select these Virtues, or any of the additional ones listed below.

Honor

Honor encompasses many of the noble traits, but primarily deals with loyalty to friends, family, organizations and countries. Honorable characters have adopted the values and canons that guide their relationship or organization, and they will absolutely resist thoughts or actions contrary to that code.

- Fair weather friend
- Loyalty of Convenience
- True Friend
- Honorable
- Chivalrous

Love

Some go through life seeing the worst in others, while others show love by cultivating and nurturing that which is good around them. Sometimes Love is the only emotion strong enough to give humans the willpower to survive calamity.

- Pessimist
- Normal
- Benevolent
- Loving
- Mother Teresa

Truth

A virtue often taught but seldom followed is adherence to truth. Truth means not only honesty and integrity in speech and action towards others, but also to oneself. Being truthful to yourself means facing reality and is a character's best defense against mental illness or derangement.

- Deceitful
- White liar
- Honest
- True
- Saint

Health

Health shows the character's physical well-being. As he is hurt through accident or violence, the player can track the character's condition by marking off boxes as the character is injured or recovers. The Extra boxes are added for record-keeping convenience. Some characters can increase the amount of punishment their mind and body can take through magic, and the extra boxes can be used to indicate these bonus levels of injury.

For example, a character whose Stamina has been raised to 7 by the Draught of the Ox could mark two of the extra squares to show that he has two additional levels of injury before he begins to suffer penalties. When the character is injured, the player would mark these first injury levels by crossing through the circles corresponding to the two Extra squares.

Freebie Points

The last step of creating the character is spending Freebie points. The player has a pool of 30 points which can be used to buy dots in any area of the character sheet. These points help round out the player's image of the character in terms of stats. The following list shows the number of Freebie points required to purchase different points in different areas. Note that before making other purchases, the player must pay for

the character's chosen Occupation. For example, a Magician character would have to pay 15 of her 30 Freebie points for her occupation.

Area	Cost
Magic Skills	6
Attributes	5
Abilities	2
Virtues	2
Ba	2
Ka	2
Backgrounds	1
Willpower	1
Sekhem	1/3 points of Sekhem

Freebie points cannot be used to acquire spells. The number of spells a Mummy has at the start of the game is discussed in the next chapter.

That's it for the statistics of the character, but as good roleplayers and Storytellers know, stats are only the skeleton of the character. The character's background and personality are what flesh out the skeleton. To develop the character's lifeline, you may want to go to history books (or yes, even your local library) and finding some key time periods or events during which the character was alive or even witnessed or participated. History is fascinating stuff; it easily fills the character's life with excitement and significance.





Chapter Two: Magic

Oh come, Dr. Muller. Surely a few thousand years in the earth would take the mumbo jumbo off of any old curse?

— that Oxford chap, *The Mummy*

My conversation with Sahura went deep into the night and early morning. He was captivated by my own Vampiric history, though I gathered from his insightful questions that he knew more about the power structures of the Camarilla and Vampire Clans than I did. For my part, I was enthralled by his accounts of his immortal existence. I left the hour before dawn but made arrangements to meet with him again.

We began meeting regularly and became good friends. In many ways, Sahura took a paternal role towards me. He educated me in many areas of etiquette so that over the next few years, many of my personality's rougher edges were smoothed away. He also entreated me to feast upon his private library. My formal education had been cut short in my youth, and I had never truly exercised my brain, but Sahura's stories of the past made me an avid reader of history.

In that house I learned a great many things about the world and about Sahura's kind, whom I called Mummies after I had seen the Boris Karloff talking picture of 1932. Sahura himself had been a scribe in the court of the pharaoh. Being a humble man, he wouldn't tell me what monuments he had worked on, but I gathered that his work must have been important to someone. It evidently caught the attention of a cult of magicians who, according to Sahura, had been the caretakers since the time of Osiris of a necromantic ritual

which granted eternal life. When Sahura had fallen sick to the coughing disease and was on his deathbed, the magicians visited his house and performed the ritual for him.

Neither Sahura nor any of his brothers and sisters in immortality seemed to know why they had been chosen to receive the ritual. All of them were certain, however, that the cult which maintained the ritual had been destroyed sometime around the birth of Christ.

Sahura corresponded with several Mummies, and he read me segments of the letters so that I felt that I knew several of them. I never met any of them, however, until Sahura took me to see Tchatcha-em-Önkh.

Of all the wondrous things about Sahura, what fascinated me the most when I first knew him was his command of magical forces. He would explain some of these things, such as his phantom servants, called ushabtis, in general terms. The servants issued forth out of small wooden figurines whenever there was a chore to be done in the house. Sahura explained ushabtis were traditionally buried with Egyptians to act as their servants in the afterworld. They could work the fields for the deceased so that he could rest in the afterworld. Apparently many museums carry collections of the figurines, but it takes magical skill to free the servants from their statue forms.

My host constantly professed that he held but a layman's knowledge of magic. He told stories of the great magicians of ancient Egypt and their incredible feats. He also spoke of the gradual decline of magic over the first two millennia of his life. He spoke of the bewildering confusion of theologies that muddied the art of magic until it was naught but myth, and he spoke of the burning of the library at Alexandria.

Still, for all of Sahura's humility, his servants never ceased to fascinate me, and his work with incantations on the many amulets he wore or the rod he carried allowed him to accomplish uncanny feats.

I learned of Tchatcha-em-Önkh in March of 1935, when winter had yet to lift off of Chicago. As I entered his study, Sahura was penning a letter to a friend in the odd pictogram writing. His brush strokes were flawlessly elegant on the parchment.

"Who are you writing?"

"Tchatcha-em-Önkh," he replied without looking up.

"Who?"

"A great sorcerer. Fabulous for his time, though by his time he was not privy to the pure skills of magic like Isis or Anubis were."

"When did he live?"

"About two months ago."

"No, I mean when did he first live?"



"Oh, this English language. So confusing. I knew him when I was a young man in Khufu's court. He taught me all of the magic I know — a mere drop in his ocean of knowledge. I turned to the easier and more artistic pursuit of scribing before I became a serious student."

"What are you writing?"

"Well, I'm asking him to warm this damn city up, at least for a week. More importantly, I'm asking him if I could study with him again for awhile."

"Really," I said, a bit hurt Sahura would leave.

My distress must have shown in my face, because Sahura stopped scribing and came to stand beside me.

"I'm also asking him if I could bring you to visit him, just for a day. I think you should see another of my kind, and I know that you would be fascinated by the magic Tchatcha-em-Önkh can wield."

"What about our friendship? I feel as though we are just becoming friends."

"Well, Edward, the beauty of being immortal is that we have many days ahead. If Tchatcha-em-Önkh agrees to tutor me, I will probably spend a decade with him. Meanwhile I'd like to give you the deeds to my property here in North America and ask you to look after them a bit. I would appreciate the favor."

And so it came to pass. Tchatcha-em-Önkh replied to Sahura in a dream, and so we left Chicago on an unseasonably warm night in late March. I only wish to briefly describe my meeting with Tchatcha-em-Önkh to give you an idea of the magic these immortals can wield. I have promised to keep the location of his dwelling in strictest confidence since the man has lived there for thousands of years and enjoys his privacy. Besides, I'm not really sure where it is.

Sahura and I left at midnight. He handed me a slender silver chain with a small amulet attached. We went to the roof of the brownstone where he bade me put the amulet on while he donned an identical chain. Immediately, my heart seemed to flutter and the city began to fall away beneath me as I floated up into the sky.

"Wonderful," I said. Sahura simply smiled.

We broke through the clouds and our ascent halted. Sahura stepped down onto the rolling surface of the cloud as if it were solid ground.

"Let's go. The sun will rise earlier up here," he said and began to hike off across the clouds.

I followed him across the white drifting plain for the rest of the night. Once during our trek, I stopped to point out a shooting star blazing in the heavens above.

"Ra does battle with Apophis so the sun may rise tomorrow," he explained.

"I thought it was a meteorite."

"That too," he said.

When the sky began to brighten and my skin tingle, we dropped through the clouds down into wilderness terrain unlike anything in the Midwest. Our cloud hike had taken us quite far. I spent the night in a cave, and the next evening Sahura and I finished our hike to Tchatcha-em-Önkh's palace. Again, I will refrain from description.

Tchatcha-em-Önkh received us personally. He was short, thin and dark skinned with no trace of body hair. He wore a simple white shirt and breeches buckled with a gold clasp. His countenance was serene but not quite benevolent, and his eyes held power — absolute power.

He greeted Sahura formally in old Egyptian. His voice was soft and controlled. Sahura introduced me, still speaking Egyptian. The wizard turned to me and spoke.

"He bids you greetings and welcomes you to his house," Sahura translated.

I thanked him and we entered a plush living area where my host and friend enjoyed a small repast and conversation. Sahura translated pieces for me, telling me Tchatcha-em-Önkh had just had a Garou visitor he had aided in a matter of the spirit world. He also said it had been seven lifetimes since he had hosted a Vampire.

Then we toured his laboratories — a fascinating, enchanting and bewitching cornucopia of the occult. Three rooms had been devoted solely to alchemy, and adjoined a store-room with innumerable specimens of plant, animal and rock. A tower had been converted to the study of the heavens, with three telescopes and star charts dating from the Egyptians, Romans, Mayans and modern times lining the walls. An adjoining building for smithing, complete with furnaces for smelting and stores of raw ores, almost drove me into frenzy from the heat. And, finally, a huge earthen crypt filled with the trappings of a true necromancer lay under the compound. That part of the tour we cut short for both Sahura's and my own comfort.

After the tour, Tchatcha-em-Önkh retired from our company and Sahura took me back up to the stargazing tower. Through one of the great windows he showed a constellation to me.

"That is Seshat, the wife of Thoth. She scribes the lives of men on the leaves of the tree of heaven. When we were here earlier this night, Tchatcha-em-Önkh asked Seshat to show your leaf to him. He said that many important things will weigh on your shoulders one day."

"Is that good or bad?"

"Good, I think."

"It's a bit ambiguous, don't you think?"

"Fortunes are best left that way, lest people rely on fate alone to carry out their lives. He did say you should follow the constellation of Horus, that it would guide you well until your days are done."

"He didn't mention when that would be, did he? I was under this weird impression that I was immortal."

Sahura grimaced. "Edward, you know that your kind can face the Final Death, unlike Tchatcha-em-Önkh and myself. And the deaths you face are rarely pleasant."

Sahura looked away to hide his expression. I said nothing.

"You'd best go now. There to your left is the constellation of Horus. Hike towards it and you will go home." With that he rubbed my silver amulet and helped me step out the window.

The Magic of the Nile

Mummy characters have many facets of power. Some are mundane, such as temporal resources or learned skills and knowledges, while others, such as unique spiritual powers and the skills of magic, are supernatural.

Mummies carry on a tradition of powerful enchantments whose origins date back to ancient times. Only a few Mummies, such as Tchatcha-em-Önkh, have a degree of mastery over these ancient magical abilities. The rest have a smattering of knowledge picked up in their first few lives or learned from masters like Tchatcha-em-Önkh. All Mummies have one thing in common, however. Just as they guard their very existence from mortals through their own Masquerade, so do they zealously guard their magical knowledge, especially from those mortals who could use it. To Mummies, their magic represents a safeguard against the passage of time and the changes accompanying it.

This chapter introduces a few new terms as it describes rules for using, resisting and learning Egyptian magic. It also details many incantations for each Magic Skill, thought the Storyteller is encouraged to create more, including rituals specifically tailored to fit a Scene or Story.

Storytellers should note that at higher levels of ability, Magic Skills give Mummy characters powers that make them the peer of the eldest Vampires. Any Storyteller who allows a Mummy in the same game as Vampires should carefully balance the character's magic potential with the powers of the other characters in the Chronicle.

Spellcasting

Using magic is far from a certain event. Magic is an elemental power which, at best, can be directed but can never be tamed. The magician is like a lightning rod in a thunderstorm, hoping the magic strikes and finds its path to ground through him. None of the Magic Skills, especially Necromancy, are for the faint of heart. No character may use a Magic Skill at a level above his rating in the Self-Control virtue.

This chapter lists many spells and powers open to Egyptian sorcerers. With each spell is listed a difficulty number for attempting the incantation, and also an effect level which the character must equal or surpass for the spell to be successful.

For example, the level four Hekau spell, Naming the Heart's Destruction, carries a difficulty number of nine, and an effect level of 40.

To successfully cast a spell or ritual, the magician must roll the applicable Magic Skill against the spell's difficulty number. A botch on this roll spells disaster. The caster immediately loses Sekhem equal to twice the spell's difficulty number, and must check Willpower against the spell's difficulty. A botch on this Willpower roll means that the caster has become a source rather than a funnel for the magical energy. His Sekhem rapidly drains away to zero while he shrivels up and dies (Ba goes to zero). A normal failure on the Willpower roll means the spell has gone awry in the worst possible way (affecting the caster, having an opposite and perhaps permanent effect, etc.). A success on the Willpower roll means the magician has partially controlled the botched spell and its effects issue out randomly, leading to any number of crazy and destructive effects the Storyteller desires.

If the magician fails to get any successes on the casting roll, the incantation fails and the caster loses a number of Sekhem points equal to the spell's difficulty number. If she does not have enough Sekhem left to cover the loss, she falls unconscious at zero Sekhem and the spell automatically botches horribly.

If the magician succeeds with one or more successes, it's time to do some quick math. Multiply the number of successes by the difficulty number of the spell. If the result is greater than the effect level of the spell, the caster is successful. If the result is short of the effect level, the magician has two options: (1) she can choose to let the spell fail and lose Sekhem equal to the difficulty number, or (2) she can boost the result up to the effect level by spending Sekhem to increase the casting result.

Example: The Hekau spell mentioned above, Naming the Heart's Destruction, has a difficulty of 9. Tchatcha-em-Önkh has a Hekau skill of five (lucky guy). We roll the dice for Tchatcha and get three successes (real lucky guy). Multiply 3 successes times the difficulty of 9 and we get 27. However, the spell's effect level is 40, so Tchatcha can either let the spell fail and spend 9 Sekhem, or spend 13 points of Sekhem to boost his casting total up to the effect level ($27 + 13 = 40$) and successfully cast the spell to give someone a massive coronary. Note that Tchatcha would have needed all five successes on his casting roll to avoid spending additional Sekhem to power the spell. Most of the higher level spells require extra Sekhem.

Resisting Magic

The great bulk of Egyptian superstition seems to have been aimed at warding off bad magic, spirits and the evil eye. Evidence and some old written accounts suggest talismans and trinkets to ward off bad magic were commonplace among the people of ancient Egypt.

Egyptian magic is powerful stuff, and without some protection, many characters will be very susceptible to its effects. Most spells listed below give the victim some chance to minimize the incantation's effects, but these opportunities are risky at best. The Magic Skills of Amulets and Hekau will afford characters with the best protection against harmful magic. The types of protection these two skills afford are very different and are discussed below.

Learning Magic

It is extremely difficult for Mummies to increase their magical powers. The knowledge of the skills and specific enchantments has died away with time, leaving Mummies with only each other to learn from. To grow in magical power, Mummies can do three things, all of which cost experience: (1) Raise their Sekhem score, (2) Increase their Magic Skill ratings, and (3) Learn new spells or formulas.

A character's maximum Sekhem score can be raised one point by expending one point of experience and meditating for at least one day.

Mummies can increase their Magic Skills at a cost of their current rating times five. They can gain new Magic Skills at a cost of seven experience to gain a rating of one in the desired skill. In addition to the experience, the character must find a teacher with sufficient knowledge and ability to teach the new skill. The teacher may exact a hefty price in goods or, more commonly, in service. The character must spend a considerable amount of time with the teacher to acquire the skill. There is no hard and fast rule on the amount of time, since it should be more a matter of Chronicle time-flow, designed to keep the Chronicle moving and everyone involved. Upper levels of skill, however, take years of study, and must be accommodated in the character's life if he desires to learn the skills.

Learning new spells or formulas also requires a knowledgeable teacher, and a number of experience points equal to the spell's difficulty number. Again, some amount of time is required to learn the new formula (generally a day per difficulty level). Note that a Mummy can never learn or use a spell of higher level than her applicable Magic Skill.

Beginning Spells

Newly created characters begin with a certain repertoire of spells. After they have chosen their beginning Magic Skills, they may select a number of spells whose difficulty numbers add up to no more than 10 - the character's Ba, multiplied by her Occupational Magic Skill points. For example, a doctor multiplies her Ba of 4 by her occupation's beginning Magic Skill points of 5 to get 20. The character can purchase any combination of spells whose combined difficulty numbers do not exceed 20. As in learning spells, beginning characters cannot select spells at levels above the rating of their corre-

sponding Magic Skill (e.g. selecting the level 4 spell, Naming the Heart's Destruction, with a Hekau rating of 2 is not permissible).

Sekhem

Sekhem is the vital energy force within the magician akin to the elemental force of magic. When the magician's skill at drawing on the forces of elemental magic does not garner him sufficient energy to power his incantation, he must sacrifice his own Sekhem energy to complete the spell.

As a magician loses Sekhem, he becomes more and more fatigued. Magicians with less than 10 Sekhem are visibly pale, perspiring and weakened. If a sorcerer's Sekhem ever drops to zero, he falls unconscious until he regains a point. Powerful Egyptian magicians with very high Sekhem scores (80+) exude power. Just as magicians with low Sekhem appear pale and weak, powerful magicians charged with Sekhem appear vital and energetic. Their eyes are gateways to the burning power kept in their souls.

Magicians tax their reserve of Sekhem very quickly, and the only way to regain it is through time. Characters regain a maximum of 10 percent of their maximum Sekhem per day (round fractions up). If the character chooses to thoroughly rest and meditate uninterrupted all day, she may roll her Stamina against a difficulty of 6. The number of successes multiply the amount of Sekhem regained that day, while no successes mean something distracted her and kept her from regaining any. A botch means she actually lost Sekhem due to her anger and inability to concentrate. For example, if a character has a maximum Sekhem of 34, she would regain 3 points of Sekhem per day. She chooses to rest throughout the day and gets two successes on her Stamina roll. She regains $2 \times 3 = 6$ Sekhem that day.

If push comes to shove during a story (and when doesn't it), the Storyteller can feed the character the daily Sekhem points throughout the day at a prorated pace.

Raising Attributes

One of the most frequent uses for Alchemy and Amulets is to increase Attributes. These magics are the means by which Mummies can raise their Attributes to superhuman ratings, acquiring uncanny abilities. Besides the added benefit of having extra Attribute points for any rolls the character must make, Attributes mystically increased above level five also give Mummies a number of added benefits. Below is a list of comments and exceptional powers for each Attribute to give the Storyteller some guidance on utilizing exceptional Attributes for Mummies. Note that a character who drinks a potion or activates an amulet which boosts her Strength to six will not necessarily experience all of facets of exceptional strength listed (i.e. both running speed and grip strength); the exact effects vary according to different formulas for the same basic spell (see Alchemy below).



Once potions run their course, and the character's raised Attribute falls back to its normal level, all benefits are lost. A character can only utilize one amulet and one potion for any single Attribute simultaneously. Wearing two amulets or drinking two potions at once to increase Stamina does not give additional benefit — only the stronger amulet or potion takes effect. However, the character can wear an amulet for Stamina and simultaneously drink a potion for Stamina and the effects will be added, though not beyond eight. Potions and amulets compliment each other, but two potions or two amulets do not. No combination known to Mummies can raise an Attribute above eight, even if the Attribute starts at a five without magic.

Strength

- 6 Sprint as fast as a galloping horse. Lift a motorcycle or uproot a small tree. Break the neck of a bull ape with bare hands.
- 7 Jump like a mountain lion. Push down brick walls. Lift a small car. Bend steel bars. Rip sheet metal like paper.
- 8 outrun a cheetah. Lift 10 tons. Fold pennies with the fingers.

Dexterity

- 6 Extra action (like Vampiric Celerity). Agile as a spider monkey. Perfect balance.
- 7 Two extra actions. Unnaturally flexible. True ambidexterity (including feet).
- 8 Three extra actions. Superior reflexes — can drive 200 mph and it feels like 40. Minute body control — can flip a coin to land heads every time.

Stamina

- 6 Extra Health Level. Immune to common diseases and mild poisons. Can run a deer to exhaustion. Hold breath for 10 minutes.
- 7 Three extra Health Levels. Disease and poison immunity. Endure temperature extremes (-40F to +140F) without shelter. Endurance of a Wolverine.
- 8 3 Extra Health Levels. Never fatigues aerobically. Doesn't need sleep.

Appearance

- 6 Better than the supermodels.
- 7 The character's appearance is different to different people, changing in their perception to be the perfect figure, coloration, scent, etc. for each person's ideal partner.
- 8 Opposite sex and others who might be attracted must roll Stamina against difficulty 8 or become enraptured (even to the point of fainting).

Appearance ratings of six to eight allow the character some ability at emotion control due solely to their extraordinary looks. By roleplaying somewhat seductive actions toward their targets, the character can inspire lust, or by behaving flamboyantly promiscuous, can inspire anger or jealousy in others. The character makes a resisted test between Appearance and victim's Willpower. The number of successes indicate the degree of success. The action can become more than the character bargained for. At Appearance eight, even the slightest look can trigger this emotion control, which can cause the character more complications than benefits. The inspired emotion lasts as long as the character is in sight and then gradually wanes away.

Charisma

- 6 Hypnotic eyes. Commanding voice. People will actively try to please the character and be worthy of the character's attention.
- 7 The character exudes charm or fear. Mortals who are the subject of the character's attention will have a physiological reaction to the character's presence, actually releasing endorphins or adrenaline in their systems as the character charms or intimidates them. The effect can be quite strong.

ranging from sensual pleasures as great as a Vampire's Kiss to fear reactions bordering on the psychotic. The Storyteller may allow the mortal a Stamina roll against the Mummy's Charisma to resist the effect.

- 8 One visit from the character would change a mortal's life. The character will tend to be deified in any society she remains with for very long.

High Charisma ratings allow the character to attempt emotion control as in Appearance, except that the character can instill the emotions of blind love or hatred in any individual. In order to attempt the control, the character must talk with the victim for some time one-on-one, or to a crowd.

Manipulation

- 6 Given a chance to speak to an individual, the character can change his victim's Demeanor to an Archetype of the character's choosing. The character must make a resisted Manipulation vs. Willpower roll with the victim. If successful, the victim's Demeanor will instantly change, and stay changed until something occurs which would normally make the character revert to another Demeanor.
- 7 The character can make suggestions which cause her victim to perform impulsive actions. The victim is allowed a resisted test between the Mummy's Manipulation and victim's Willpower. Even if influenced into action by the Mummy, the victim can still spend a Willpower point to resist actions which would cause physical self-injury.
- 8 Characters with Manipulation Attributes of eight wield a most invasive power. Through sustained conversation with another, the character is able to change his victim's most basic belief structure. Unless the victim wins a resisted Willpower roll against the Mummy's Manipulation Attribute, the victim's Nature will be changed to an Archetype of the Mummy's choosing. Alternately, the Mummy may use this power to send a Vampire or Garou into Frenzy or give the victim any one Derangement (this requires the Mummy to also succeed in a Psychology roll versus the victim's Truth or Self-Control Virtue).

Perception

- 6 Long-range sight of an eagle. Hearing of a deer. Nightvision of a cat. Smell like a bloodhound. Can "feel" the exact weight of small objects.
- 7 See into the infrared range. Hear like a bat, including sonar ranging effect. Immune to Vampiric Obscure through Level 5 Disciplines.
- 8 Sees flashes of the future at Storyteller's discretion. Know opponent's next move in melee (can use Perception in lieu of Dexterity for dodging or

rolling to hit, but the combat must be up close and personal). Immune to Vampiric Obscure. Psychometry at Storyteller's discretion. Limited Telepathy — can send and receive simple messages over any distance or scan surface thoughts within several meters.

Wits

- 6 Calculator mind — can perform almost any computation instantly. Can count objects at lightning speed (247 toothpicks in the pile).
- 7 Parallel tasking — the character can simultaneously perform multiple tasks. This isn't just walking and chewing gum at the same time; the character could be adding a list of figures on a tablet, reading a book, daydreaming about a loved one, and debating politics with a friend simultaneously, performing each task at normal speed and ability. There is a limit to the complexities of the tasks (Storyteller's discretion), and there is a physical limit to how many objects the character can handle at once. Ambidexterity combines well with this power to minimize these physical limitations.
- 8 Characters with Wits of eight are an exceptionally rare breed. They have expanded their minds sufficiently that communicating with others seems a waste of time, and the simple activities of life have little meaning. The character's mind operates at such an accelerated pace that to the outside world, the character appears to be in an autistic cerebral withdrawal. When the magic that boosted him to the eight rating runs dry, he will have had a most incredible insight into the true nature of reality. The knowledge he brings back might be the true name of an object or force (for Hekau magic) or an astounding revelation in any field of knowledge. The character might also have pondered every known factor of some person, group, or society to extrapolate what the entity's most probable future will be.

Intelligence

- 6 Eidetic Memory. Has a Cliff Clavin ability to recall miscellaneous factual information on virtually any topic. This power does not take the place of the detailed expertise involved with having knowledge abilities. Flashes of Insight — the character has a knack for making serendipitous discoveries in whatever knowledge field he pursues.
- 7 Can "remember" forgotten Skills or Knowledges. Player selects Skill or Knowledge Ability she wants the character to have and rolls Intelligence



against a difficulty assigned by the Storyteller (usually 8). The number of successes equals the rating the character suddenly has in that skill. The Storyteller should limit this recollection power to Skills and Knowledges the character could conceivably have learned in past lives and should require the player to briefly explain the circumstances surrounding the original acquisition of the Ability (Well, I suddenly remember sitting in a room in Italy, many lives ago, discussing politics with this man named Machiavelli). The newly acquired Ability fades from memory once it is no longer needed.

- 8 Collective Memory — the character has a power akin to telepathy. The character can study any willing individual and add that person's memories to the character's own. The process takes several hours and is extremely depersonalizing and traumatic for both the character and the memory giver. The character will gain any Knowledges possessed by the subject, and any Skills and Talents at half rating (round up). Magic Skills and spells known by the subject are also learned. If the character's Intelligence ever drops below eight, all gained memories, magics and Abilities are lost. The character will suffer episodes of split personality if the collective memories are held for extended periods of time.

Magic Skills

Alchemy

For the Egyptians, Alchemy was not the vain pursuit of turning lead to gold. Rather, the Egyptians looked to alchemy for all manner of elixirs, ointments and aphrodisiacs. The strength of Alchemy is that the magician gains the potential to perform a multitude of enchantment effects. The weaknesses are that many of the magical effects are temporary, and all spells must be formulated in advance.

Preparing an alchemical formula requires a number of days in a laboratory equal to the spell's difficulty number. At the end of that time, the magician makes his casting roll to determine success. If sufficient ingredients are on hand, the magician may prepare more than one dose of the spell during his stint in the laboratory. If the spell is successful at the end of the mixing time, the magician can prepare one dose for every multiple of the spell's effect level that his casting total equals. For example, Queen Hetephras is preparing a Potion of Passion which has a difficulty of 6 and an effect level of 15. She gets two successes on her casting roll, giving her a casting total of $(2 \times 6 =) 12$. She elects to spend Sekhem to increase the casting total. If she spends three Sekhem, she gets one dose ($3 + 12 = 15$). If she spends 18 Sekhem, she gets two doses ($18 + 12 = 30$, and 30 divided by the effect level of

15 equals 2). The only limit to the number of doses is the amount of ingredients Hetephras has or the amount of Sekhem she can spend.

Note that Vampires can imbibe these potions just as they do blood to gain the mystical effects. However, the Storyteller might want to modify the effects (perhaps based on the character's Humanity?).

Level One:

(Attribute) +1

Difficulty Number: 5

Effect Level: 10

Key Ingredients: Varies

This category of brews gives the imbiber +1 to a specific Attribute. There are many different formulas, and each enhances the Attribute in slightly different ways. These minor variations are especially noticeable in the Physical Attributes. Most of the potions are named after animals, such as Eyes of the Cat (Perception), Salve of the Serpent's Tongue (Charisma) and Heart of the Horse (Stamina).

Characters must learn each potion for each Attribute as a separate spell. Once imbibed, the potion lasts one hour for Physical Attributes, one day for Social and one week for Mental.

Drink of Seven Days' Rest

Difficulty Number: 4

Effect Level: 10

Key Ingredients: Eye mucus from a sleeping infant

This potion restores vitality to whomever drinks it. The potion takes a few moments to take effect, after which the recipient feels as though she had just woken up from a full night's sleep. She will not need to sleep again for at least 72 hours.

Potion of Numbness

Difficulty Number: 4

Effect Level: 6

Key Ingredients: A live mosquito

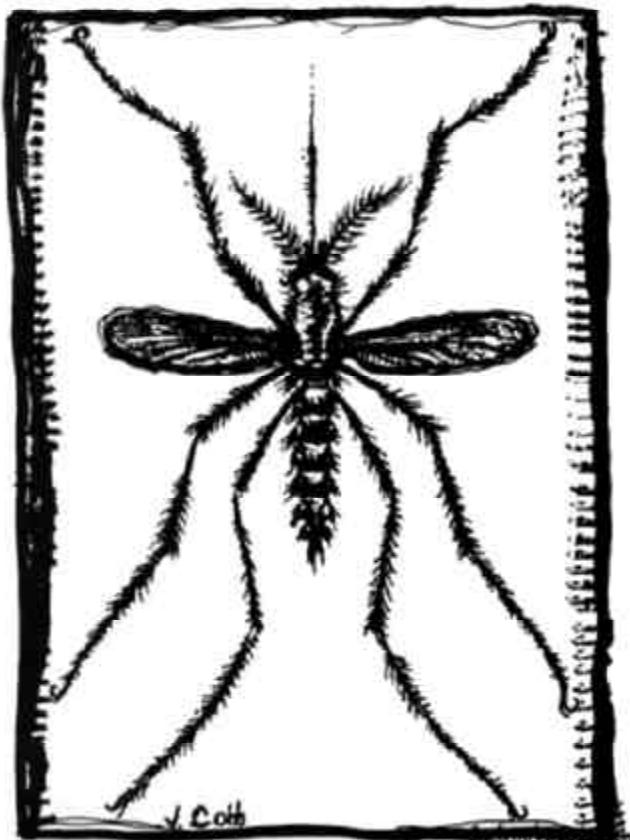
Use of this potion numbs the imbiber's body, blocking sensations of pain from reaching the brain. Used in ancient times as an anesthetic, warriors also use it before entering combat since it reduces the penalty due to wounds by two (e.g. if the imbiber is Mauled, his wound penalty is -2 instead of -4). The effects last for several hours.

Potion of Passion

Difficulty Number: 6

Effect Level: 15

Key Ingredients: Any bodily fluid taken from a water buffalo bull during mating season



This is the lowest grade love potion in the alchemist's repertoire. When imbibed, the victim must roll Self-Control against difficulty 6 or suffer the potion's effects. While under its effect, the victim will fail all Self-Control rolls, and can only spend Willpower points if he first succeeds in a Willpower roll against difficulty 6. For storytelling, the victim becomes a puppet to his passions, raging or lustful with little or no inhibition. If the potion is to be used as an aphrodisiac, the victim must be still be seduced, but it's a simple job. Every hour the victim can roll Stamina against difficulty 6 to shake off the effects.

Level Two:

Perfume of Longing

Difficulty Number: 6

Effect Level: 22

Key Ingredients: Crushed lotus petals

One dose of this perfume will last a lady one evening or about six hours. Any man who comes within whiffing distance of her must make a Perception roll against difficulty 8. To those men who fail the roll, the lady's Appearance is three higher than normal.

Drink of Health

Difficulty Number: 6

Effect Level: 15



J. Cobb

Key Ingredients: Pus from a gangrenous wound

This potion will heal one Health level in any living being. It may only be used once per day. The drink remains magically potent for one month after it is brewed.

Level Three:

(Attribute) +2

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 20

Key Ingredients: Varies

This set of potions grant the imbiber an extra two rating points in a specific Attribute. Like all potions for Attribute gains, there are many different formulas for each Attribute, and characters must learn potions for different Attributes as separate spells. The potions last 30 minutes for Physical Attributes, six hours for Social, and three days for Mental. In addition, once brewed, the potion is only potent for three months before losing its magical properties.

The formulas are typically named after natural wonders or animals, such as **Beauty of the Lotus** (Appearance), **Draught of the Ox** (Stamina), or **Tonic of Ten Thousand Laborers** (Strength).

Pharaoh's Peace Elixir

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 32

Key Ingredients: A woman's tears

This salve is said to have been invented for Pharaoh Ramses II. The pharaoh was away from court on military conquests, and upon his return to court, his harem of 100 wives were jealous for his attention. Eventually the infighting among his wives became too great of a headache for Ramses to bear so he commanded his greatest alchemist to concoct a formula to relieve the pharaoh's misery.

This salve soaks directly into the bloodstream once it is applied to the roof of the mouth and the tongue. The magic of the potion effectively raises the man's Charisma by three to any female who fails a resisted Perception test against the man's new Charisma rating. The potion is also said to grant its user increased sexual stamina.

Level Four:

Elixir of Good Body

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 40

Key Ingredients: Segment of any creature that can regenerate, such as an earthworm, crab, etc.

Once taken, the user of this elixir falls into a heavy coma which lasts for two days. Unwilling victims can resist the coma with a successful Stamina roll against difficulty 8. While in the coma, any damaged organ or lost limbs are

repaired or regrown. When the recipient of the magic awakens, she will have a freshly restored body, right down to 20/20 vision.

The potion remains magically potent for only a day after it is brewed.

Eyes of Desire

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 50

Key Ingredients: Butterfly wings

Another in the long list of aphrodisiacs, this formula creates a special kohl which a lady applies to shadow her eyes. When she makes eye contact with a man she desires, he must make succeed at a Self-Control roll versus difficulty 9, or he will immediately begin to mirror the lady's desire.

This spell is commonly intended as an aphrodisiac; however, it will equally well instill any emotion. Whatever the woman feels for the man she makes eye contact with, he will feel for her if he fails his roll. This means that if a sorceress is simply trying to seduce some contemptible fool, the man will not desire her, rather he will suddenly hold her in contempt and disdain. The lady must spend Willpower if she wishes to project an emotion other than her true feelings.

Level Five:

(Attribute) +3

Difficulty Number: 10

Effect Level: 50

Key Ingredients: Varies

There are a few rare and arcane formulas that unlock the unknown potentials of the human body and mind, bequeathing their user three points in an Attribute. All of the formulas are distinct and must be learned separately. These elixirs last for but 10 minutes for Physical Attributes, two hours for Social, and one day for Mental. These alchemical concoctions bind their magic for only one month, after which they become only bitter solutions without benefit.

The spells are all named for Egyptian deities. Mind of Thoth (Intelligence), Might of Ra (Strength), and Cunning of Set (Manipulation) are a few of the known spells.

Potion of Vile Body

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 45

Key Ingredients: Any poisons or venoms from at least four different animals (spitting cobra venom, scorpion poison, man-o-war venom, etc.).

After quaffing this deadly mixture, the imbiber's entire body becomes a system of poisons and acids. The imbiber himself is immune to all of the effects of the potion, but

everything around him is in peril. The imbiber's bodily fluids have the following properties, plus any variations the Storyteller or player devise.

Spittle — The character can spray a cloud of acid from her mouth which will douse a small area up to 10 feet in front of her. The acid will quickly corrode all but the most resistant objects; however, the quantity of acid in each breath is small, so only a centimeter of the surface hit dissolves. Of course, the magician can keep spraying until she blows holes in doors, walls or people. Anyone covered by the acid spray will suffer three health levels of damage. They can make Stamina rolls against difficulty 9, with each success canceling a Health Level of damage. The acid causes aggravated wounds to Vampires and Lupines.

Tears — The character's tears contain supernaturally potent acid that will dissolve any material.

Blood — The imbiber's blood becomes very poisonous and acidic. Vampires drinking the magician's blood will suffer one aggravated damage level per blood point imbibed. Anyone cutting the character in melee might be sprayed for damage just as if the character had spit on them. Also knives, bullets and even talons will dissolve if soaked in the character's blood, though they still cause normal damage to the character.

Breath — By simply exhaling at someone who in turn breathes in any of the exhaled air, the magician can cause paralysis. The victim must make a Stamina roll against difficulty 8 or fall into complete paralysis. The victim can make another Stamina roll every hour to break the paralysis.

Amulets

Egyptians buried their dead wrapped up and pinned with a dizzying array of exquisite amulets and charms, all designed to protect the deceased in various ways as she entered the afterlife. Some Mummies still hold the secrets to creating and using these physical storehouses of magical energy. Through arcane and all but forgotten formulae, they are able to bind the raw force of magic into the amulets.

The physical object that becomes the receptacle of this energy has no set form. Egyptians of office commonly carried rods of metal. Many Mummies still carry these tokens of position and imbue them with magic. However, smaller charms worn on chains or straps of leather are more common.

Casting an amulet spell is very similar to works of alchemy. The enchantress must have a well-stocked magical laboratory and smelting furnace at her disposal. The spells require their difficulty number in weeks of work to prepare the physical receptacle, although this work may be interrupted with other activities and continued later. Successful preparation of the receptacle requires a Blacksmithing and a Metallurgy (if the receptacle is metal) or Geology (if the receptacle is semi-precious stone or gem), rolled against the difficulty of the spell. A failure on either roll indicates the receptacle is unsuitable, and a new one must be made.

Once the receptacle is prepared, the enchantress casts the spell. If the casting fails, the receptacle is tainted with the incorrect magical pattern and is no longer useful. If successful with the casting, the enchantress must feed the amulet Sekhem until her casting total exceeds the spell's effect level. Amulet magic is different from all others in that the caster can gradually feed the creation Sekhem rather than needing to have sufficient Sekhem at the time of casting. This feeding can take days, weeks or months of uninterrupted work, during which the magician eats and sleeps very little, but constantly tends the creation, droning endless litanies of magic over it and feeding it her Sekhem daily until the effect level is reached. During this feeding time, the caster regains Sekhem normally, but is far too busy to rest and meditate.

Only a Magician knowledgeable in the Amulet Magic Skill can tap the magic stored in the items. The Magician must roll his Amulet skill against the difficulty of the spell to activate a amulet's power. Once activated, the amulet generally stays "on" until the magician turns it "off," which is accomplished automatically. There are a few Amulets magicians cannot activate for others' use. For example, amulets raising Attributes can only be used by the magician who created them since they must be attuned to her aura.

Several of the amulets are designed solely to ward off magic. Indeed, amulets are one of the most effective wards against both Hermetic and Egyptian magic. These amulets will have a ward rating given to them. Whenever the amulet

is called upon to shield against magic, the spell cast towards the carrier of the ward must overcome the ward rating of the protective amulet. The effect level of the spell being cast at the amulet is raised by the amulet's Sekhem rating, so that the caster of the attacking spell must pump more power into his spell to break through the protection of the ward.

If a character casts the blocked spell, the Storyteller should simply inform the player (after the character has reached the effect level) that his spell is encountering a ward, and would he like to expend additional Sekhem? If he chooses not to, his spell fails and any Sekhem committed to it is lost. If he decides to further power the spell so it exceeds its normal effect level, he simply decides how much to spend and hope that it is enough to break through the ward. Otherwise he's just wasted even more Sekhem.

For example, a character casts Naming the Heart's Destruction at an enemy. The character succeeds with the spell by rolling 3 successes and then adding 13 Sekhem to the get his casting total up to the spell's effect level. Then the Storyteller informs the player that the enemy has a ward. While the player wonders where this scoundrel got an Ab Ward, she must decide whether to commit more Sekhem to the spell or let it fail. She decides to throw in 10 more Sekhem. The Storyteller knows the enemy's ward has a ward rating of 8, so the spell breaks through.

Since the Storyteller is omnipotent about the characters' wards, he must exercise fair judgment when making the guessing game decisions for Sekhem expenditures by characters that he controls (for instance, having them make Wits rolls against a difficulty of 8).

Wards protect against Hermetic magic by giving the protected character a resistance roll using the number of dice equal to the ward's rating divided by five (rounded up) against a difficulty of 8 (modified by the Storyteller due to the power of the spell). Thus someone wearing a Minor Ward with an effect level of 25 would have five dice to roll. Note that this roll must be made against all spells, harmful or beneficial.

Level One:

Simple Wards

Difficulty Number: 6

Effect Level: Desired ward rating x 5

Key Ingredients: Varies

These wards are designed to protect the organs of the body from evil magic. The magician must decide the ward rating of the amulet before she begins the fabrication process. Simple wards can have a maximum ward rating of eight. Simple wards are far from complete protection, but they are helpful.

Common wards are listed below. The most popular are heart and brain.



1. **Heart (Ab)** wards protect the organ and also lend their ward rating against emotion-controlling magic.

2. **Brain** wards shield the wearer from unwanted telepathy and guard their carriers against mind-controlling magic.

3. **Ren** wards protect wearers from Hekau magic directed at his personal true name. Ren wards are individualized wards specific to the person named during the ward's creation.

4. **The Eye of Horus** protects the wearer's senses from magical deceptions which would seek to blind or delude.

Wood Ward

Difficulty Number: 6

Effect Level: 70

Key Ingredients: Metal from an axe head melted to form the amulet.

The skin of anyone wearing a Wood Ward becomes highly resistant to wood. Any wooden staffs, poles or stakes tend to crumble and snap when they strike the character as if he were made of iron. The character's Stamina is effectively doubled when resisting damage from wooden attacks.

There are disadvantages to wearing active Wood Wards, such as furniture crumbling when the character sits down. Also, nature spirits look unfavorably on the character who wears the ward whether it is active or not.



Most Mummies realize the Vampiric weakness for wooden stakes, and as with any magic of ancient Egypt, Mummies are loath to share this ward with a Vampire or anyone else.

Level Two:

(Attribute) + 1

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 100

Key Ingredients: Any metal ore from a fallen meteorite.

These amulets raise any single Attribute by one. Like potions, characters must learn the incantation for each Attribute as a separate spell.

Amulet of Cloud Walking

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 85

Key Ingredients: Dew collected on winter solstice, silver

When activated, this amulet carries its wearer up into the sky until he is level with the cloud tops. The wearer may then set his destination firmly in mind and hike across the clouds. Every league of cloud walking becomes many leagues of the ground, but there is no set rule to this mystic distortion. The hike takes no set time — sometimes days sometimes minutes — but when the wearer reaches his destination, the amulet will begin dropping him through the clouds back to Earth. Expert magicians say the hike takes as long as the traveler wants it to be.

Level Three:

Metal Ward

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 130

Key Ingredients: Mercury

Similar to a Wood Ward, the Metal Ward amulet protects the wearer from metals. Metals tend to become very soft and pliable upon contact with the wearer. The harder the metal impacts the character, the softer it becomes. Bullets tend to splash off of the character like raindrops, while simply grasping a crowbar will make the iron pliable but still stiff. The wearer of a Metal Ward doubles her Stamina in resisting metal attacks. Note that some Mummies have found out the hard way that certain modern metallurgic combinations (including some carbon steels) are not significantly affected by the ward.

Minor Ward

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: Desired Rating x 7

Minor Wards are similar to the Level One Simple Wards. Minor Wards have a maximum rating of 25.

Level Four:

Charm of Invisibility to Animals

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 300

Key Ingredients: Eye of any animal suffering from cataracts

Ancient Egyptians had a number of spells to protect them from serpents. The Book of the Dead includes a spell to allow the deceased to pass by nine guardian serpents unhindered on his way to the afterworld.

Anyone wearing this charm is protected from not only serpents, but from all animals, being undetectable to them. The magician makes no noise, leaves no scent and cannot be seen by any animal. Vampires in animal forms are unaffected by the charm, though the magician will be hazy to them. Garou are similarly unaffected, except Lupus, who can only detect the magician on a Perception roll against difficulty 8.

Nature Ward

Difficulty Number: 9

Effect Level: 600

Key Ingredients: Lavastone, glacier ice, desert sand, and wood from a tree hit by lightning.

Magicians protected by this ward are immune to most of the powers of nature. The magician's body temperature will remain comfortable in any climate; lightning or electricity will route away from the magician, leaving her unharmed; fires caused by natural means extinguish themselves before harming the sorceress; and even rain will not fall on the magician. The ward does not protect the magician from hunger, fatigue or drowning.

Level Five:

+2 Attribute

Difficulty Number: 10

Effect Level: 1200

Key Ingredients: Any metal ore from a fallen meteorite.

Using these amulets raises any single Attribute by two. Each Attribute is a separate spell to be learned.

Major Ward

Difficulty Number: 9

Effect Level: Desired Rating x 9

Major Wards are similar to the Level One Simple Wards but have a maximum rating of 50.

Celestial

In 3,000 years, someone will uncover a book from our times on reading horoscopes, and conclude that we were a culture which gazed to the stars daily for guidance. It's a sad thought, but it is amazing how prevalent astrology still is in our culture today — featured in our newspapers, practiced by mediums and expounded on in tons of books. Looking to the stars to foresee the future was certainly a part of the ancient Egyptian culture. Stars were used by magicians to foresee the correct time to cast their spells, by seers to predict the future and by the layman to know what days were lucky or unlucky for any number of activities.

Unless otherwise noted in the spell description, all Celestial magic is ritual magic which requires a number of hours equal to the spell's difficulty number to cast. At the end of the ritual, the magician makes his casting roll. Also, unless otherwise noted, Celestial magic rituals can only be performed at night, and the Magician must have a view of the night sky.

Celestial magic draws its power from the alignment of the stars and planets. With such awesome power to work with, the Celestial magician can create incredible weather effects and other natural phenomenon which cover large areas. This capability makes Celestial magic both the most powerful magic, and the weakest, since its effects usually take time to materialize and do not target specific individuals.

Celestial magicians are also able to read the stars to divine a variety of information on the future. They garner special benefits for their ritual magic through reading from the stars the times when such spells should be cast.

Level One:

Grip the Water

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 20

Key Ingredients: Sample from body of water effected.

Using this ritual, the magician is able to alter the level of water in any dynamic water body such as a stream, river, lake or ocean. Depending on the size of the water body and the length of coastline affected, the magician can raise or lower the water level from a few centimeters (ocean tide on the Atlantic coast of North America) up to a couple of meters (one harbor on a lake). More potent versions of this ritual are said to exist which can control rivers such as the Nile or part seas or oceanways like the Red Sea or the Bering Strait.

Weather Magic

Difficulty Number: See Below

Effect Level: Difficulty Number x 2

Key Ingredients: Dirt or water sample taken from area to be affected.



This one spell gives the magician power to call forth a variety of mild weather effects. The spell can be tailored based on the desired effects, area, and duration. The magician can choose options from the list below, adding all of the difficulty numbers together to determine the actual difficulty of the desired ritual. Spells with difficulties above ten cannot be cast.

For example, a character wants to bring a one-hour light rain to a muggy little town in Florida. The difficulty would be 2 (effect) + 1 (area) + 1 (duration) = 4.

Changes in humidity are all relative. A magician decreasing humidity during a downpour would lighten the rain to an easy sprinkle. However, Level One Weather Magic will not make rain in the desert.

The magician may choose the time, within a week from casting the spell, when the effect will begin. The weather will slowly change, last for the duration of the spell, and then slowly change back to normal.

For purposes of learning this spell, treat it as difficulty 6.

Effects	Difficulty
Slight change in humidity	2
Warm or Cool +/- 10° F	1
Cool breeze	1

Area	Difficulty
Small town	1
Small City	3
Large City	5
Duration	Difficulty
Hour	1
Day	3
Week	5

Level Two:

Weather Magic

Difficulty Number: See Below

Effect Level: Difficulty Number x 3

Key Ingredients: Dirt or water sample taken from the area to be affected.

Similar to the Level One Weather Magic, but this spell allows for more significant effects, areas and durations. For purposes of learning this spell, treat it as difficulty 7.

Effects	Difficulty
Small change in humidity	2
Warm or Cool +/- 20° F	2
Steady Light Wind	1

Area	Difficulty
Small town	0
Small City	1
Large City	2
Size of Rhode Island	4
Duration	Difficulty
Hour	1
Day	3
Week	5

Read the Stars

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 12

Key Ingredients: Star Charts

Using this ritual, the heavens display their secrets to the magician. If he successfully casts this spell, he gains knowledge of the stellar alignments which will allow him to cast any other spell in his repertoire much easier. Once he has read the stars, the magician must make an Astronomy knowledge roll against the difficulty number of the spell he wants aid in casting. The number of successes gained on his Astronomy roll will give him an equal number of extra dice to his appropriate Magic Skill roll when he casts the desired spell. This bonus is good for a single casting of the benefited spell at a specific time determined by the alignment of the stars.

The Storyteller should determine when the stars will be in alignment to benefit the spell in question, by either deciding or rolling randomly (e.g. three dice worth of days hence). The time will almost always be days, weeks or even months from the present. The magician cannot benefit from Read the Stars for the same spell until the alignment has come and passed (can't keep casting it until successful or until he gets a time period he likes).

Level Three:

Call the Stars

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 35

Key Ingredients: Sample of anything fallen from the heavens (meteorite, Skylab, etc.).

Using this ritual, the Celestial magician is able to call the stars to rain down on any area the size of a small town. If the spell is successful, a shower of falling stars (meteorites) will commence. The falling debris will tend to be less than 20 cm. in diameter, but are traveling at great speeds and in great numbers. The meteorites will pound weak structures into the ground, and damage sturdier ones. The shower can also start fires and club senseless anyone not under shelter. The shower

generally lasts for an hour. Powerful Celestial magicians are said to be able to pull larger objects from the heavens with more powerful rituals.

Weather Magic

Difficulty Number: See Below

Effect Level: Difficulty Number x 5

Key Ingredients: Dirt or water sample taken from the area to be affected.

Similar to Level One Weather Magic, but this spell allows for significant effects, areas and durations. For purposes of learning this spell, treat it as difficulty 8.

Moderate humidity changes would bring a light shower to a desert.

Effects

Difficulty

Moderate change in humidity 2
Warm or Cool +/- 30° F 2

Steady, Strong Wind 1

Area

Difficulty

Small City 0

Large City 1

Size of Rhode Island 3

California 5

Duration

Difficulty

Hour 1

Day 3

Week 5

Level Four:

Weather Magic

Difficulty Number: See Below

Effect Level: Difficulty Number x 7

Key Ingredients: Dirt or water sample taken from area to be affected, plus ingredients matching desired effect (rain collected from a monsoon storm, ice from a glacier, etc.). Significant humidity changes would bring flooding rains to any area except the heart of the driest deserts.

Similar to the level one Weather Magic, but this spell allows for dramatic effects, areas and durations. For purposes of learning this spell, treat it as difficulty 9.

Effects

Difficulty

Significant change in humidity 2

Warm or Cool +/- 40° F 2

Hurricane Winds 2

Area	Difficulty
Large City	0
Rhode Island	1
California	2
North America	4
Hemisphere	5

Duration	Difficulty
Hour	1
Day	3
Week	5

Read the Tree of Life

Difficulty Number: 9

Effect Level: 20

Key Ingredients: None

Seshat, the wife of the Egyptian god Thoth, wrote the lives of men on the leaves of the Tree of Life. By casting this spell, the celestial magician can peer into the night sky and discern the leaf of any mortal (including Vampires who, technically, can die). What the magician reads there are fragments of what fate has in store for the mortal. The exact information is left to the Storyteller. This is the most powerful and direct of the fortune-telling magics.

Level Five:

Apep Thrashes the Ground

Difficulty Number: 9

Effect Level: 90

Key Ingredients: Crushed skull of a snake killed in an earthquake

This spell creates an earthquake of supernatural magnitude (8.0 - 10.0 Richter scale). The magician bends the forces of the planets, causing them to rend the Earth's crust along a chosen fault line. Like any earthquake, the effects will ripple out from the chosen epicenter to level cities and cause volcanoes to disgorge. The effect is immediate upon completion of the ritual and cannot be delayed.

Apep is one name for a giant serpent who tried to prevent the sun from making its journey through the underside of the world every night.

Weather Magic

Difficulty Number: See Below

Effect Level: Difficulty Number x 10

Key Ingredients: Dirt or water sample taken from the area to be affected, plus ingredients matching desired effect (rain collected from a monsoon storm, ice from a glacier, etc.)

Similar to Level One Weather Magic, but this spell can make hell freeze over. It creates devastatingly powerful effects that sweep continents. For purposes of learning this spell, treat it as difficulty 10.

Insane humidity changes would bury cities in rain or snow if allowed to continue for a day or more.

Effects

Difficulty

Insane change in humidity 2

Warm or Cool +/- 50° F 2

Heavy Wind 1

Tornado Storms 2

Area

Difficulty

Rhode Island 0

California 1

North America 2

Hemisphere 4

Global 5

Duration

Difficulty

Hour 1

Day 3

Week 5

Figurines

In addition to belief in wards and charms, Egyptians also believed figurines could be made to assume the living shape they represented. Statuettes of animals could spring to life in a wizard's hand to do his bidding, temple statues were believed to house the spirits of gods and goddesses; there are also tales of sorcerers crafting replicas of people or objects, and then inflicting injury to the thing by injuring the model — not unlike voodoo practices. And, finally, many tombs contained statues of the deceased which the Ka could inhabit so the deceased would have a material presence on Earth after death.

Figurines are created through ritual magic, requiring a number of days to carve the model and work the magic equal to the spell's difficulty number. At the end of the ritual, the magician makes his casting roll to determine success.

Once created, most Figurines can be used repeatedly. Every time the magician wishes to activate a Figurine, he must roll his Figurine Magic Skill against the difficulty number of the spell which created it. He cannot activate Figurines created by spell levels above his ranking in Figurine Magic Skill. If the magician fails his activation roll, the Figurine becomes magically useless. Once activated, the Figurine assumes its full size and shape for as long as the caster desires and has Sekhem to pay. Each Figurine spell description details the Sekhem expenditure a magician must make to keep the model activated. Once he stops feeding it

Sekhem, it instantly reverts to its miniature form. Sekhem spent in this way cannot be recovered until the figurine returns to its model.

If a figurine is destroyed in model or full-size form, or is killed, it becomes worthless. All Figurines require a small sample of the thing they represent as a key ingredient in their creation formulas.

Level One:

Lesser Animals

Difficulty Number: 6

Effect Level: 14

Key Ingredients: Sample of animal

This spell allows the magician to create figurines of any small animal such as rats, doves, fish or house cats. When activated, the figurine springs to life and will perform simple tasks for the magician, including carrying messages, searching for objects, gnawing through bindings, etc. A sample from a living animal the figurine represents must be fashioned into the figurine when it is created. While active, small animals require a point of Sekhem from the magician every hour.

Ushabti

Difficulty Number: 5

Effect Level: 10

Key Ingredients: Wood or onyx, sweat from a field worker

Egyptians who could afford them were buried with small models of workmen, carved from wood or stone. These model laborers were to be the deceased's substitute workmen when she was called upon to work the fields in the afterworld. Tombs would contain large collections of the figures, one for every day of the year. There were even larger models of foreman ushabti, presumably so the deceased didn't even need to look after her workers.

For living Mummy characters, ushabti are excellent servants for tending the character's lands and houses. Ushabti's can lift moderate weights (100 lbs) and are good at simple labors. They are worthless for security.

Ushabti are best when used with foreman ushabtis so the character need not activate them at all. An active ushabti will cost a character a Sekhem point per week.

Level Two

Animals

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 30

Key Ingredients: Sample of animal



This spell allows the magician to produce models of larger animals around the size of dogs, vultures, barracuda or cobras. As in the level one spell, the animals which spring to life from the models will obey simply commands from the activating magician. They will defend their master to the death if ordered to do so. These figurines require two points of Sekhem per hour from their activator to remain in life-size form.

Objects

Difficulty Number: 6

Effect Level: 15

Key Ingredients: Well-crafted version of object modeled.

This ritual allows the Figurine magician to create figurines of simple inanimate objects. The objects can be no larger than a double bed and cannot be technologically advanced (i.e. no electronics, motors or plastics). When activated, the tiny model will grow to true size, staying large as long as the magician spends one Sekhem per day maintaining it.

Level Three

Foreman Ushabti

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 20

Key Ingredients: Wood or onyx, blood from a field worker

With a foreman ushabti, a magician makes his other ushabti servants programmable. The magician need only activate the foreman ushabti figurine and place it with up to 10 normal ushabti (see the level one spell), and the foreman will automatically direct the ushabti to activate and do their chores as necessary.

Minor Structures

Difficulty Number: 6

Effect Level: 30

Key Ingredients: Sample of a similar structure.

This spell allows the magician to keep figurines that will grow into any minor structure they are fashioned to represent. Minor structures include small houses, automobiles, single engine aircraft, yachts and other objects of the same relative size or smaller. The structure requires two Sekhem per hour to maintain. Structures of very high technology (advanced fighter jets) are difficult to accurately model with this spell. The Storyteller should increase the difficulty number if such structures are attempted.

Smart Animals

Difficulty Number: 9

Effect Level: 35

Key Ingredients: Sample of animal's brain

This spell is identical to the level one Small Animals spell except the animals created are much more intelligent. They are able to act as spies, reporting back to the enchanter in telepathic flashes what they have seen (these reports can be very confusing and rarely contain intelligible speech). They will follow instructions with fairly simple logic — if a man wearing a red robe enters the building, report back to me. Smart animals require one point of Sekhem to maintain every hour.

Level Four

Large Animals

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 70

Key Ingredients: Sample from animal

This spell can create figurines of any animal from a dragonfly to a blue whale. As with the level one spell Small Animals, the animal will faithfully carry out any simple command from its activator. Large animals require four Sekhem per hour to keep them active.

Mimic Minor Structures

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 60

Key Ingredients: Sample of structure, picture or sketch of structure for modelmaking

With this spell, the magician creates a model of any minor structure magically linked to the actual object. When the magician activates the model, it does not grow to full size; rather, it remains model-size, but the mystic connection with the true structure is activated. Whatever the magician does to the model will be mirrored on the actual structure. Buildings collapse or catch fire, automobiles go out of control, airplanes somehow steer through the hurricane safely, etc. The model requires one point of Sekhem every minute to maintain the link.

Level Five

Ka Statue

Difficulty Number: 9

Effect Level: 90

Key Ingredients: Life-size stone statue replica

Using this spell, the magician transforms a statue into a receptacle capable of receiving and storing a Ka spirit. The statue must be carved in the image of the person whose Ka will reside therein. Once fashioned, the magician performs the ritual over the statue to make it suitable. In addition to the Sekhem spent for the spell, the recipient of the spell must permanently forfeit both a point of Ka and Ba at the end of the ritual (before the casting roll for success is made). Once

fashioned, the receptacle will endure until the stone is shattered, or weathered away to such an extent that its features are no longer recognizable.

When the subject dies, his Ka spirit is set free and normally wanders as a ghost. However, it may instead enter its Ka Statue and animate it. The statue becomes an animate golem directed by the Ka as if it were the deceased's own body. It may not speak and moves slowly (Dexterity 2), but it is very strong (Strength 6) and hard as stone. It cannot be stopped, short of shattering its stone body (treat the body as having Stamina 8 and use the Health track and Extra boxes accordingly).

The Ka can only animate the statue while the character is dead, not when he is simply freeing his Ka for spirit travel (see next chapter).

Mummy magicians use Ka Statues as an excellent means of allowing their Ka to better protect their dead physical body.

Large Structures

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 65

Key Ingredients: Sample of a similar structure.

This spell is similar to the level three spell Minor Structures. It allows the magician to create miniatures of virtually any construction. Extraordinary structures such as skyscrapers and nuclear submarines would have higher difficulty



numbers (like 10), or may not be allowed by the Storyteller. Large structures require four or more Sekhem per hour to maintain, depending on their size. Note that these Structures take several minutes to grow and must have adequate foundations or they will collapse, ruining the figurine before it reaches full size.

Mimic Human

Difficulty Number: 9

Effect Level: Target's Willpower x 10

Key Ingredients: Sample from target

This spell is similar to the Mimic Structure spells, except that it creates a link between the magician's model and the living or undead human being the figurine represents. When the magician activates the spell, the subject, wherever he is, will suddenly feel himself gripped by the mystic link. He can attempt to break the link by winning a resisted Willpower check against the magician's Willpower. If the victim is successful, the magician's figurine shatters.

If the magician successfully takes control of the victim, the victim's every movement, except speech, is subject to the magician's control. The magician can prevent the victim from speaking, but cannot control his words. The victim has control over himself when the magician does not choose to manipulate the figurine, but when forced into movement, the victim's limbs flail like a puppet on strings.

The magician may also cause any type of injury to the victim, including deadly injuries, by methods like setting the figurine on fire so the victim self-immolates.

Maintaining the connection costs a number of Sekhem per minute equal to the victim's Willpower.

Mimic Large Structure

Difficulty Number: 9

Effect Level: 90

Key Ingredients: Sample of structure, picture or sketch of structure for modelmaking

This spell is identical to the level four spell for minor structures except that it accommodates larger constructs. These figurines require four points of Sekhem every minute to maintain the link.

Hekau

By far the most powerful Egyptian sorcerers were those who had command over true names. Any force, animal, plant, man or object has a true name, a mystically inseparable part of it. By calling a true name, a Hekau magician has the power to create, control, destroy or even become the thing named.

Human beings, by the nature of their souls, are slightly different from all other things when it comes to names. Every human has his or her own Ren, or True Name. Characters have theirs listed on their character sheet. Conversely, individual animals do not have separate true names. All hyenas

share one true name, and mastery of that one name provides mastery over all hyenas. However, the individuality of human names is far from a complete safeguard against Hekau; there's one catch. There are still generic true names for parts of the human body — such as Ab for heart. Naming the Heart's Destruction will explode the heart of any man or animal. But human name distinction is still a powerful defense if the True Name is kept secret.

Unfortunately for modern people of the Western world, the true name is used in everyday life. The experienced Hekau magician need only know the full given birth name to gain control (why does the old freak want to know my middle name?).

With such power comes a great cost. Hekau magics generally have high effect levels and therefore require significant Sekhem expenditure to perform. The silver lining is that Hekau magics are relatively easy to learn and have low difficulties. The magician need only practice the correct pronunciation of the true name.

But, as the Grateful Dead say, every silver lining's got a touch of gray. The penalty that goes hand-in-hand with Hekau's ease of use is that every name is a separate spell. For example, the Level Two Command Animal, is not a spell in and of itself, but Command Dog or Command Elephant are Level Two Hekau spells. Command Animal is listed as a level two spell to be an indicator for what types of Hekau Magic are available at level two proficiency. The specific names/spells must be learned individually.

Most Hekau magicians are loathe to share their knowledge of True Names. Each is a gem in their hoard of magical treasure. Hopeful students had best have a high level of trust with their chosen teacher and a willingness to perform great service.

All Hekau magics take a single action to perform and do not require any ingredients. They are quick and deadly in times of violence.

It is impossible to give a full explanation of every possible use of Hekau. The following descriptions are a guideline for the Storyteller and players. Ultimately, the magic must simply integrate into the story and is therefore under the Storyteller's control for determining the limitations on each use of the spells.

Level One

Asking the Trees

Difficulty Number: 3

Effect Level: 10

This group of Hekau spells affect any class of vegetation named (trees, grass, vines, and yes, shrubberies too). The magician names the plant type and adds a Hekau incantation of control. The plant will obey any simple command by the caster, even animating slightly to obey. Trees will drop

firewood from their branches or weave their foliage to provide rain cover, grass will erase any trace of passage and vines will grapple anyone nearby.

Forgetting the Stone

Difficulty Number: 4

Effect Level: 20

These spells work against any kind of mineral or metal. The magician names the substance, and then invokes a Hekau script for forgetting the true name. The resulting effect is that reality forgets the substance exists, and it is destroyed. The caster can eradicate about a cubic meter of material with each casting.

Naming the Warning

Difficulty Number: 3

Effect Level: 12

This spell is designed to ward off animals simply by stating the creature's true name. Upon hearing its true name spoken by the caster, the animal will recognize the magician as someone who potentially has control over it and will behave accordingly. Most animals will cower and run/fly/swim away at their earliest chance. Only if an animal is cornered will it fight the caster of this spell.

This spell does not work particularly well against animals under the supernatural control of another since the animal's faculties are dominated. However, the animal will still falter and fret upon hearing its name called. Supernatural beings such as Lupines, Vampires or Magi who have assumed animal form must pass a resisted Willpower to Willpower test with the caster, or they too will suffer the effects of this spell.

Level Two

Command Animal

Difficulty Number: 4

Effect Level: 25

These spells allow the magician to command any animal whose true name she learns. The animal will be under the magician's control as long as she can continue to give it verbal commands. If given the opportunity, the creature will probably flee the caster's presence as soon as control is relaxed. The animal's service will not last longer than a few hours per casting of the spell. Commanding animals already under another magician or being's control requires a resisted Willpower test between the two controllers. The winner controls the animal.

Inviting the Stone In

Difficulty Number: 5

Effect Level: 40

This is the crudest of the Hekau transformations. By naming a mineral or metal, the caster's skin immediately begins to solidify and change color. In just seconds, the

magician's entire body will have transformed into an inanimate lump of the named substance. The caster will no longer be recognizable as a human shape, just a small boulder of rock or ore, roughly the same volume as his human body. As a rock, the caster can still hear, smell and feel what transpires around him, but cannot see. If the magician's rock form is chipped or cracked, the magician himself will be injured as well.

Becoming the Tree

Difficulty Number: 4

Effect Level: 35

This spell is identical to Inviting the Stone In, except the caster transforms into the plant named, assuming its full size from moss to redwood tree. The transformation is a bit slower, taking about a minute.

Forgetting the Tree

Difficulty Number: 4

Effect Level: 36

These spells are similar to the level one spells for forgetting stone, except that they affect any vegetable matter. The spell will affect about a cubic yard of fashioned woodstuffs, a single tree, or a football-field size patch of grass or crops with each casting.

Level Three

Become Animal

Difficulty Number: 5

Effect Level: 45

These Hekau transformation spells allow the sorcerer to metamorphosize into any animal. The spell lasts until the magician chooses to return to her natural form. There are several variants of these spells in use, some which have instant transformations and others which have slower metamorphoses.

There is one danger if the sorcerer chooses to remain in animal form for very long. For every day past the first two the caster maintains animal form, she must pass a Willpower test against a difficulty equaling the number of days she has held the animal form. If she fails the roll, she loses herself into the animal's mentality, effectively becoming the animal in both form and intelligence. The magician can try another Willpower check against difficulty nine each new moon.

Command the Thinking

Difficulty Number: 4

Effect Level: Target's Willpower x 8

Once the Hekau sorceress knows the true name of any person, mortal or supernatural, she can weave their true name into a spell of commandment. This spell works like the level two Command Animal spell. If the victim is commanded to do something which would cause self-injury, or something horribly against the victim's ethics, such as killing their

spouse, the victim may roll Willpower to avoid self-injury, and Conscience or Self-Control to avoid violating their ethics. The Storyteller may assign the difficulty level, with 9 and 10 being the usual numbers.

Level Four

Naming the Organ's Destruction

Difficulty Number: 9

Effect Level: 40

By pronouncing the true name of an organ, followed by the Hekau incantation of destruction, the magician ruins the targeted organ. The victim is allowed one Stamina roll against target 9 to resist. The effects of the spell vary depending on which organ is affected — destroying an eye partially blinds; lungs, heart, or brain leads to quick death; kidneys or pancreas would result in a slower death. Note that the Egyptian word for Heart is *Ab*. It was held to be the seat of a people's consciousness and was weighed against a feather in the afterworld to determine their fates.

Destroying the organs of a Vampire doesn't necessarily kill the undead beast. Instead, the Vampire suffers three health levels for small organs and five for major organs, in addition to any other effects such as blindness if an eye is destroyed. These wounds are aggravated damage for Kindred and Lupines.

Whispers to My Body

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 40 plus 5 per minute

In this bizarre Hekau spell, the magician speaks her own true name along with a magical intonation of metamorphosis. The caster is then able to manipulate her body into virtually any shape. She could stretch her limbs, disguise her face, make her whole body become a viscous fleshy liquid and pour through prison bars, stick her finger in a lock and mold it into a key, etc. The possibilities are endless. If the magician concentrates on defenses, such as conforming her skull around a baseball bat or letting bullets splash through her torso, she will suffer three less health levels of damage from any wound. Non-kinetic attacks such as fire are not diminished.

There is one danger. If the caster allows any of her body to be separated, it is just as painful or fatal as losing that body part is normally.

Level Five

Forgetting the Person's Name

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 118

As was mentioned last chapter, the Egyptians believed that if a person's name was not perpetuated after death that the soul would fade from existence. With this ruthless Hekau



invocation, the magician is able to make her enemy fade from existence. The victim gets one Willpower roll against difficulty 9 to resist. If the Willpower roll fails, others who knew the person will tend to forget he ever existed (similar, but not as extreme as, the level 10 *Obscure* discipline of **Memories Fading Glimpse**). Whether the victim's entire existence is truly erased or he simply goes on to the Final Death is unknown. Note that Mummy magicians hypothesize that this spell is the only way to end their own immortal existence.

If the victim successfully resists the spell, the magician must pass a Memory test against the intended victim's Willpower, or the magician suffers temporary amnesia lasting until some story event is significant enough to return her memory.

Necromancy

At its lower levels of use, Necromancy is a very noble, if somewhat grisly, magical art whose main purpose is to prepare the dead for the afterworld. Many of the minor funerary spells said for the dead are not listed here, since they would rarely come into play (not many ancient Egyptians are getting buried these days). There are some spells Mummies still use to make their rebirth easier. All Mummies begin with a rating of one in Necromancy.

As a magician advances to higher levels of this magical art, things start becoming much more bizarre and horrifying. She begins to spend more and more time working with corpses and talking to herself (or her dead companions). Few necromancers of advanced ability are without some mental disorder. Whenever a character advances in Necromancy beyond a rating of two, she must roll Willpower against double the desired skill level or gain a Derangement of the Storyteller's choice (see **Vampire**). For example, a character is being instructed in the art to raise her skill from three to four. She must roll Willpower against difficulty ($2 \times 4 = 8$) to avoid gaining a Derangement.

Most of the upper-level Necromancy spells involve communing with spirits. One necromancer claims to have spoken with spirits who have faced the Final Death, but the necromancer is quite insane, so who's to say if it's true. Often, once a necromancer's sanity begins to slip, demons visit him masquerading as spirits to gradually subvert the magician's will. It's an art for the brave of heart or sick at mind.

Level One

Body Preservation

Difficulty Number: 4

Effect Level: 10

Key Ingredients: Natron

This spell requires one day to perform. The magician usually casts it upon herself as her Ba drains away and she is about to die. If successful, the spell will keep the magician's

physical body from decaying for approximately 50 years, after which decay slowly sets in.

Separate Ka

Difficulty Number: 5

Effect Level: 5

Key Ingredients: None

This spell takes but a moment to incant and, if successful, frees the caster's Ka from his body. The immaterial (and optionally invisible) Ka may then wander anywhere within the immediate vicinity of the physical body. See the next chapter for the powers of the Ka spirit.

This spell costs one point of Ka if successful, and the magician must spend five Sekhem every hour this double is divorced from the living body. The caster's body is lifelessly comatose and extremely vulnerable while the Ka is free.

Level Two

Revisit Death

Difficulty Number: 6

Effect Level: 12

Key Ingredients: Vulture feather or hyena tooth.

Casting this spell while touching a corpse allows the necromancer to see a vision in his mind's eye that replays the manner of the corpse's death. Just how much the information the vision relates is up to the Storyteller. The spell requires 10 minutes to cast.

Level Three

Separate Ba

Difficulty Number: 7

Effect Level: 15

Key Ingredients: None

Like the level one spell for freeing the Ka, this incantation takes a moment to perform, and then the magician's Ba is free from his physical body. The necromancer's Ba enters the spirit world in astral travel, connected to his physical body by a silvery cord. See the next chapter for details on travel in the spirit world. The magician must expend five points of Sekhem every hour his Ba is gone from his living body.

Level Four

Animate Corpse

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 35 + 4/hour

Key Ingredients: Human or animal Corpse

This necromantic ritual requires at least five minutes of chanting to invoke. While chanting the spell, the magician must either be massaging the corpse's heart or breathing air into its lungs (like mouth-to-mouth resuscitation). When the

ritual is complete, and if it is successful, the corpse will animate in a mindless semblance of life. It is under the necromancer's mental control, behaving like a puppet on strings. The corpse posses average strength, but may be limited by its structural integrity.

If commanded to fight, the corpse is nigh unstoppable. The only means to defeat it is to render it useless by hacking off its limbs. For quick combat, assume the corpse can suffer twice as many health levels as normal.

Khaibit

Difficulty Number: 8

Effect Level: 50

Key Ingredients: None

This ritual is dark necromancy at its best. When cast over a dying individual, it separates the Khaibit, or shadow double, from the person. As the Khaibit separates, the recipient of the spell re-experiences all of the moments in their life when they were truly angry, deceitful, lazy, jealous or filled with dark desires. These moments flash before the recipient's mind's eye in a horrifyingly traumatic sequence, and then the Khaibit divorces itself from the person.

The Khaibit is a shadowy spirit made up of all the individual's negative emotions. It can manifest as a semi-corporeal shade, but usually flits about on walls or floors as an immaterial shadow. The divorced Khaibit is no longer part of the person, and has a will of its own. It is an innately evil creature with a penchant for creating mayhem. Fortunately, it is bound to the proximity of where it was released, and has limited power in the physical world. It can speak, whispering into the ear of any who can hear and will listen to its corrupting messages. The Khaibit can also manifest small poltergeist effects.

It is believed that this seemingly monstrous spell is actually done to benefit the dying person, who can now go on to the afterworld unburdened by negative emotions. The spell requires an hour to perform and must be done in a dimly lit area.

Level Five

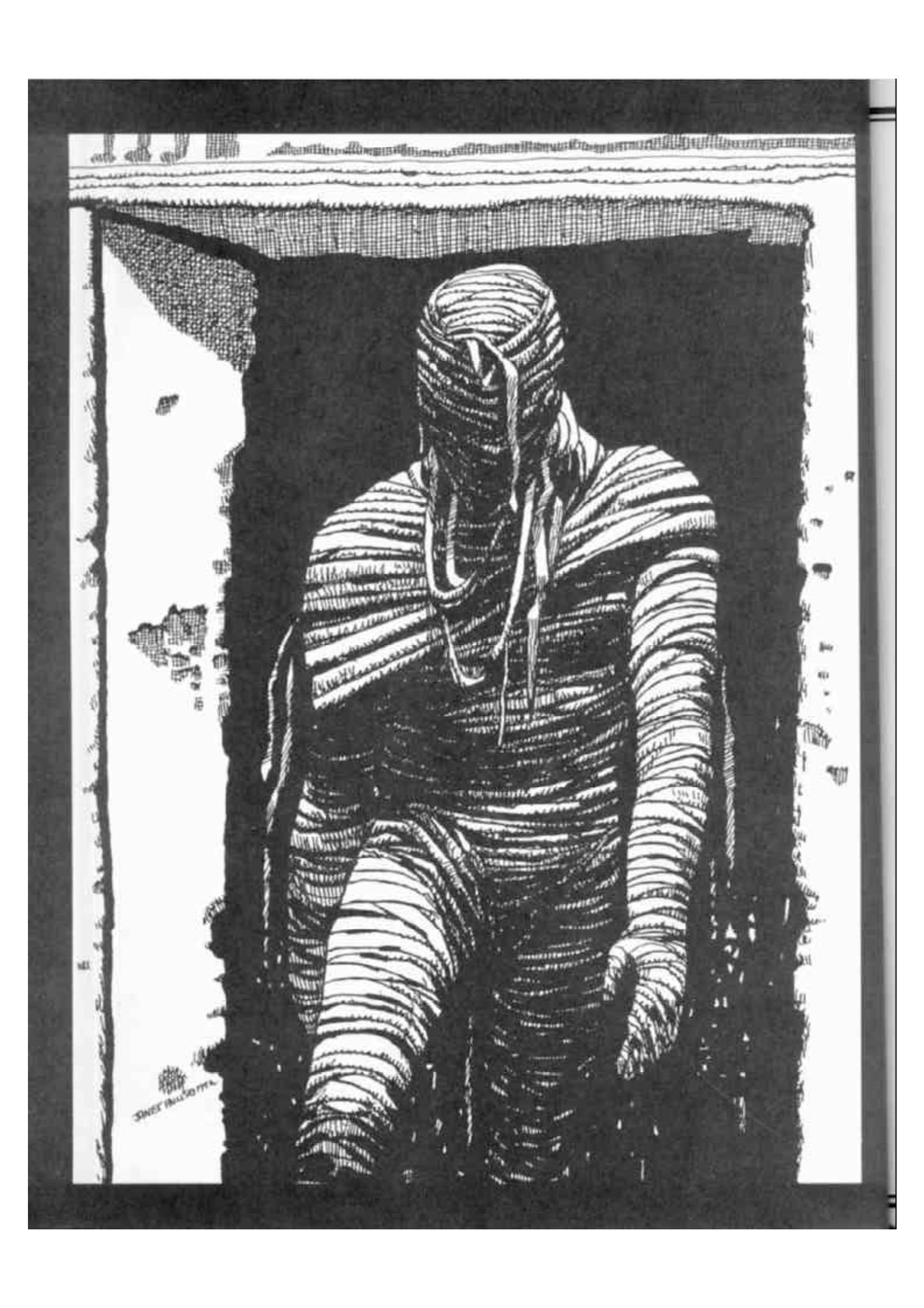
Reshaping the Lost Soul

Difficulty Number: Spirit's Willpower

Effect Level: 50

Key Ingredient: Ashes from a cremated murderer

This spell can only be cast on spirits and ghosts haunting the Earth. A successful casting allows the Mummy to turn the spirit from its original purpose, freeing it from its old confines or giving it new ones. For instance, if a ghost had haunted the site of its ghastly murder for hundreds of years, the caster could force it to haunt only an enemy's car for all eternity. Note that ghosts can make a resisted Willpower roll to keep the effects from happening, but even one success by the spellcaster forces the changes.



SHOOT

Chapter Three: The Cycle

*We are young,
Wandering the face of the Earth,
Wondering what our dreams might be worth,
Learning that we're only immortal for a limited time.*

— Rush, *Dreamline*

"Sahura, what's it like to die?" I asked one evening. "I mean to truly die, spiritually. I'm well acquainted with physical death."

We were sitting on an open terrace adjoining Sahura's large Maine house, taking in the scents of a New England autumn. It was 1948, and I had finished reading a book on Taoist philosophy followed by one concerning investigations of ghost and poltergeist phenomena. I had never pressed Sahura on the subject of what he always called the spirit world or worlds.

He ruminated on the subject of death, working his mouth and wrinkling his brow as he cogitated. "How to describe color to a man who is blind? How can you let a deaf man feel sound? It's a difficult question you pose, Edward."

"Are you saying that you have different senses when you become a spirit?"

"It's not so much that your individual senses change," he replied. "It's more that your whole sense of reality changes."

He saw I wasn't comprehending, so he elaborated. "I could try to explain using an analogy from this world. I recently read a science journal that discussed how human beings see. The author wrote that the human eye can perceive only a certain range of light, and that anything outside of this range or color spectrum is invisible to us, just as the sound of a dog whistle is outside of our band of hearing."

"You can think of this world and the spirit worlds in a similar way, even if the analogy isn't entirely accurate. The reality we live in is only one segment of a large range. Our conscious sense of reality only includes those things inside of that segment of the entire spectrum."

I took a moment to mentally digest what he said before I responded. "Then, when you're dead and free from your body, you begin to perceive in another range of reality? You can hear the dog whistle?"

"Precisely. You can hear the dog whistle, and you begin to sense and become a part of the new range of reality. But don't be caught in the idea that you have to die to enter the spirit world. Magicians go there unconsciously in their dreams or consciously through projecting their spirits from their living bodies. Some of your kind also have that ability, though its effect is more obscene. Other mortals accidentally call on similar spirit perceptions and are labeled as psychics because of their visions."

"So fortune tellers, like the gypsy crystal ball readers, are truly gifted?" I jibed.

"Yes, many of them are," he replied seriously. "Especially the gypsies, who are quite a special people. Still, the majority of psychics are charlatans, with no understanding of spirit perception or travel."

"There you're confusing me a bit. What do you mean by perception, and what do you mean by travel?"

"Well, everyone, even mortals, has the ability to peer into the spirit world — the part of the spirit world around their physical location. Using my analogy, it's broadening your senses to include what is always around you but never seen or heard.

"To travel through the spirit world requires much more than simple perception. You must divorce your soul from your physical body to travel the spirit realms. I believe Western literature calls this astral projection, or out-of-body experiences. For living beings, and even beings like your kind whose spirits are still attached to your dead, corporeal self, the spirit is connected to the physical body during spirit travel by a silvery strand. The fragility of that silver connection makes it dangerous for the living to travel the spirit worlds. Whereas, when my kind die, our Ba becomes divorced from our self and travels free without the restraints of the silver cord.

"And, Edward, spirit travel is awe-inspiring. The spirit realm itself has limitless wonders, and you may always enter certain spirit worlds which are unique experiences unto themselves."

"Wait, Sahura, I'm losing you again. Spirit worlds and spirit realms? How does that fit your analogy?" I asked.

"I apologize, Edward. I keep mixing words with you. There is so much to the spirit realm, and it has been a part of me for so long that I lose myself when I explain it. To try to answer your question, remember that I told you my analogy doesn't quite fit. The Lupines think of things as spirits and their domi. For example, you may travel the spirit realm and find the Great North Wind. You might then choose to enter the spirit of the Great North Wind and travel in that blustery spirit world."

Sahura paused and regarded me. He frowned at my look of confusion.

"I see I am still not being clear. Let me continue my own analogy to human sight. Traveling to different spirit worlds would be analogous to shifting to another range on the spectrum, shifting to another area of perceptions and experiences. Different spirits reside in different ranges of the spectrum, and you can visit any of them by traveling or shifting. You could even say that the upward end of the spectrum is where souls pass on into Elysium, Heaven or any of the other glorious places that are the true afterworld for the dead. I have spoken with my kind who have come close to that range of sensing, but no one has ever made it to that range and visited Elysium.

"There is also a lower end to this spectrum — Hell. If you cross low enough into this range, you indeed meet spirit entities which fit my description of demons. Ironically, there is no limit to how low my kind can go in the spectrum, but the experience becomes so disturbing that there is seldom reason to go."

"So heaven is closed to you, but Hell is open for tourism." I smiled at the irony. "Have you ever been there? Have you visited Hell?"

"Yes, I've been there once." Sahura shivered at the memory. "I went once to help a friend."

"Friend? Must have been a great guy if he went to Hell when he died."

He frowned at my comment, making me fear I had pressed my light humor too far. "No," he said, "going to Hell because you behaved incorrectly or sinned during life isn't entirely true in my experience. I believe where you go when you die is more a product of individual belief. If a man believes he is a so-called sinner and must go to a Hell when he dies, his spirit is so weighted with negative thoughts that he may self-fulfill his prophecy and sink into Hell. I've seen it happen."

"The friend of which I spoke was my third wife, a very dear but unstable woman. After I died, she committed suicide. In my Ba form, I saw her spirit leave her body and tried to catch her, but she was in blind panic and confusion, still weighted with the anguish that led to her suicide. Her spirit immediately began to shift towards Hell. I attempted to catch her, but Apophis found her first and swallowed her into himself."

Sahura stopped there and stared out into the night. He was visibly perspiring and his hands began to tremble slightly.

Sympathy forbade me to press him further, but my curiosity was stronger. "What did you do?" I asked.

His head turned towards me, and he stared into my eyes. His pupils were dilated like a victim's before the Kiss. His entire composure had shifted from calm conversation to animal fear. "I followed her in, Edward. Into Apophis ... into Hell, and it ... it was chaos and pain, like nothing the mind can imagine."

His voice trailed off. Tears were flowing down his cheeks, and I could hear his heart thundering as his mind played back the experience. Suddenly, he stuttered something in Egyptian and then screamed out into the night, clutching his head with both hands. His torso convulsed and he was sick on the terrace.

He didn't speak again throughout the night. He sat mutely, staring, his eyes oddly unfocused. I would have thought him catatonic except for occasional movements and glimmers of recognition when I fed him. His mind was numbed by the sudden and vicious memory.

By next sundown when I awoke, he had visibly recovered his faculties. I apologized for pressing him, and he simply waved off my apology as if the entire incident no longer mattered.

"Edward, it's time for us to visit another of my kind. I don't believe I have adequately explained the spirit realm to you, let alone the workings of the Ba and Ka, so I want to introduce you to one of my kind who has traveled the spirit worlds extensively. She currently lives in Brazil, and we will leave tonight to see her, if you wish."

We left that night on a chartered aeroplane. It took several days by air and sea to reach South America, and several more days to reach our destination by riverboat down the Amazon.

When I awoke on the sixth day of our Amazon cruise, Sahura asked me to come out on deck. I followed him out to the bow of the ship, smiling at the dark-skinned crewmen who shot me fearful glances. Sahura had explained to the captain that I was ill and anemic and had come to the tropics to recuperate. The captain was a rational man and believed the lie. The crewmen were superstitious and they knew better.

"Our hostess has sent word that we are close to her and will arrive tonight. She will send some of her people to the shore to greet us," Sahura explained.

"I hear drums," I said. The sound was a distant pulse steadily growing louder.

Sahura stood silently, holding his breath and straining to hear. "Well, I don't hear them yet, but we must be getting close."

"You haven't told me anything about our hostess."

"Yes, well, I prefer simple introductions. I don't want to impress my opinions of her on you. But, I should at least tell you her name. She is Queen Hetephras, wife of Pharaoh Snefru and mother of Pharaoh Khufu, who was the builder of the Great Pyramid at Giza."

"Oh."

We stood silently for awhile. I tried to pick out constellations in the night sky. Sahura had been teaching me the paths of the stars, reminding me that the alignment of the stars was a key to great magic, magic he had recently learned from Tchatcha-em-Önkh.

I tried to concentrate on the heavens, but the rhythm of the drums began to throb in my veins, invoking the Hunger. I could smell the sweat of the crewmen around me and feel the blood racing in their veins. As the drums grew louder, so did the call of hunger, until it pulled on every vessel in my body. I had fed poorly throughout our travel, and now the Hunger was demanding its due.

The percussions were clearly audible, and the crew began to fret. Sahura spoke to the captain in Portuguese and the crew became calmer but still walked about restlessly. Finally, as the music and my hunger were about to drive me wild, we rounded a bend in the river and could see a group of natives on the near shore who were pounding skin drums and dancing.

Sahura pointed to the shore. The captain wheeled the boat around and then slid it up to the shore. I saw the captain furtively holding a revolver as his crewman hopped ashore to wrap the linings around trees. Another crewman threw the plank down so that Sahura and I could walk ashore.

We stopped before the primitive dancers and musicians. Their lithe bodies and wild motion gave a sharp edge to my hunger. The drums picked up tempo into a climax of thunder.



and then stopped. We stood on the shore, our hearts still keeping rhythm to the vanished beat as the primitives prostrated themselves in front of us and then began to beckon us into the jungle.

Sahura spoke once more to the captain who nodded but pointed to his watch to emphasize the extent of his patience. We followed the brown-skinned primitives into the jungle. Since it is extraneous to my tale, I will not elaborate on the sights and smells that opened up to Vampiric senses in a rain forest, but someday you must go before the forests disappear. It is a religious experience, and it temporarily soothed my Hunger that evening.

However, my relief was short-lived, for as we approached the natives' settlement, they shouted ahead to their people who began a drum beat and dance whose size and emotion easily rivaled the previous performance of our guides. As we arrived at the village, made up of a dozen thatch huts, I could see scores of dark-skinned people wildly dancing to the heavy beat. Sweat rolled from their limbs as they whirled and jumped. Our guides seated us at the edge of the circle of dancers. My hunger was a caged beast in my breast.

With a crescendo of drums, the dancers leapt one last time and then spun away out of the circle. A fire blazed to life in the center of the area as the drums picked up a slower, more sensuous pace, accompanied by a high-pitched reed whose sound floated in the air eerily.

Queen Hetephras appeared from a shelter. She wore a loose dress of coarse weave that slid around her dusky limbs as she began to dance. Her black, lustrous hair was braided behind her, and green kohl highlighted her dark eyes.

I had read in Sahura's literature that Egyptian women were quite adept at seducing men, and the Queen's dance was more than enough proof of that skill. Her movements were infinitely more refined than the lurching pace of the natives, yet her limbs wove such wondrous patterns that her dance was even more primal and erotic. I was transfixed in agony and anticipation.

Finally, she wove her way near me, and cradling my chin in her hands, she beckoned me to my feet. She led me straight into the hut from which she'd emerged, while someone threw the cover over the doorway behind us, shrouding the small interior in shadowy darkness. Outside the music sped back to a frantic tempo and the dancers howled.

In the darkness, my eyes were transfixed by the pulse along her slender neck and a stream of sweat running down her bare shoulder. I could smell the oily perfume covering her flesh.

"I have heard Leeches give unearthly pleasure to those they touch," she said softly in thickly accented English.

Her hands cradled my head and pulled my face towards her neck. My teeth broke her skin and she cried out but did not let go. Her arms wrapped around my head and then she moaned

loudly as the pleasure of the Kiss came upon us. Her blood tasted oddly stagnant, but I paid it no heed and crushed her soft body to mine and drank with her gasps in my ear.

Her body writhed against mine, but her arms did not release me until I had drained her, and she lost her strength. As I laid her body on the ground, a heavy fatigue came into my body and I swooned to the dirt floor, unconscious.

I awoke in the spirit world with Hetephras standing beside me. The hut was now a translucent film around us, and the dancers outside were blazing souls of life. The forest was breathtaking in its true form.

Everything around me looked absolute, as if I had never really seen the entire object before. I looked at my physical body. It was a ghastly dark shadow on the pure ground, like an inkblot on a clean page. A thin silvery cord ran from my spirit into that black hole of a body.

Hetephras herself stood beside me unconnected to her physical body. Her spiritual body was a rippling, bright entity barely distinct as a corporeal form. And then, as I watched, another spirit form arose out of her prone physical body and stood beside it. This new form matched her physical body in every detail, but was duller and more solid-looking than the spiritual form beside me.



The new form spoke to me. "Welcome to the spirit world, Mr. Edward Hollister. Now you can see for yourself how my spirit divides when the body dies. I am the Ka of Hetephras, the guardian spirit. My duty will be to look over our physical body while the Ba roams these realms."

Then the swirling form beside me, her Ba, spoke. "Come with me," it beckoned.

Somehow I was caught in her spirit and pulled along as we raced away. The spirit world became a blur of sensations around me. We stopped as suddenly as we had started. I stood on the sands of Egypt, looking at the Necropolis of Giza.

"Magnificent," she said. "Too many buildings are constructed in this modern era without concern for their spiritual identity. Our architects began with the spiritual conception and created the physical identity."

The pyramids were indeed magnificent. As I studied them, I could see figures of men crawling about on the surfaces.

"Who are they?" I asked.

"The spirits of those who died building the pyramids. They choose to remain here, maintaining the monuments to which they devoted their lives."

"What can damage such monoliths?"

"The Desert Sand Storm blows by, sneaking past the Sphinx to eat away the pyramids."

"The Sphinx?"

She turned me around. Behind us sat the Great Sphinx, a gigantic spirit, guardian of the necropolis. The sphinx turned its head towards us and languidly blinked its eyes before turning away.

"Oh my," I said

"She's known me for a very long time, Edward. She lets me visit when I choose. I was buried here, you know."

"With your son."

"Yes, the darling brat. It was the least he could have done. Let's leave," she said, and we raced away.

Hetephras showed me many things in the spirit realm — the Grand Canyon, frolicking elemental spirits, a Mayan god spirit world, and other places and things. To her, the spirit world was an endless supply of pleasures and experiences. She thrived on them, and said she spent much of her immortal life in the spirit world.

She gave me only a few warnings of places never to go as a spirit. She said to beware of Switzerland as it was a place of refuge for her kind; beware the Himalayas, where the many of the ancients played out their "tiresome" battle of Jihad; and beware Stonehenge and Easter Island. Then she thanked me for a most pleasurable death and returned me to my physical body.

Immortality

Mummies have an immortality far different from that of Vampires or Faeries. The ritual which created Mummies has actually deprived them of the ability to permanently die, rather than given them the ability to physically live forever. Mummy characters go through cycles of death and rebirth similar to those of reincarnation, except that the Mummy always returns to the same physical body upon rebirth. The cycle of living in the physical world, physically dying, living in the spirit world, and rebirth has been repeated for millennia by the select few men and women from ancient Egypt who were blessed (or cursed) by the spell of Isis and Anubis or Set's perversion of it.

This chapter covers the death cycle of Mummies, detailing each part of the cycle and the abilities of Mummies in each phase. It also briefly discusses the Spirit World.

Dying

The great mystery — death. It's something which almost everyone has lain awake on some stormy summer night pondering. What happens to us when we die? Which religion, if any, is correct? One Greek philosopher said that he did not fear death, for if there were a true afterworld, he was confident that he would find paradise there, and if death were simply the dark end of existence, then he would accept that as well, for who doesn't enjoy a deep, relaxing sleep?

It's not the intention or theme of **Mummy** to explore these questions, so here we'll make a distinction, for game purposes, between true death and physical death. True death takes a character out of the game world. She is physically and spiritually "done for" in game terms. For example, Bobbie Willis, a mortal character, has her bungee cord rip in mid-jump, and she head butts the ground at 70 mph. Bobbie is now truly dead.

On the other hand, if Bobbie had been wandering Soho and received the Embrace from a Malkavian prostitute killer, she would suffer physical death and become a Vampire. As a Vampire, her body is physically dead, but her spirit is still joined with the undead body, so Bobbie is not truly dead. Now, when the neighborhood witch-hunter puts a 2 x 4 through her heart and then barbecues her, she will be truly dead.

Mummies cannot suffer true death. Unlike Vampires, who can truly die, Mummies are absolutely immortal. Before the character's death in ancient Egypt, the Cult of Isis visited the character and bestowed upon her the ritual of eternal life. When her body died, her spirit was set free, but could not travel to those select spirit realms where only the truly dead may go. Dazed and confused, the Mummy's Ba wandered the spirit world, receiving instructions of her immortal power from a spirit or another Mummy.

Though Mummies cannot truly die, they certainly can and do face physical death. They die in two ways: violent death and spiritual release. Violent death encompasses all of the normal demises which mortals face — car accidents, gunshots, disease, salmon mousse, etc. Since a Mummy's spirit-to-physical body connection has been broken and rejoined so many times, it is a bit more fragile. Nearly terminal wounds are sometimes sufficient to sever the link and send the character into physical death.

Whenever a Mummy character's Health track drops to Incapacitated, the character must immediately roll dice equal to her Ba score with a difficulty of 7 (adjusted by the Storyteller according to the circumstances of injury). If the character fails the test, the injury is so severe that the Mummy's spirit comes free of her body. If the character passes the test, she remains barely alive as normal. However, if the character suffers one more level of injury, she will be physically dead with no Ba roll needed.

Spiritual Release and Ba Loss

Mummies eventually face physical death even if they avoid violent injury, due to the gradual weakening of their Ba. When a Mummy is reborn into his physical body, he will normally have a substantial Ba score. Through the normal course of living, his Ba is gradually weakened as its energy is used to maintain the physical body. When the character's Ba score drops to zero, he physically dies and his spirit is released.

The cycle is analogous to people who age to the point where they are ready to die, and when they decide to die, they inevitably pass away in short order. Obviously, spiritual release is preferable to violent death, since the character knows death is coming and can prepare for it with proper burial rites and a melodramatic deathbed scene.

A character will lose one point of Ba about every decade of life, depending on the character's lifestyle. If the character abuses his body with drugs, fast food and a stressful jet-set lifestyle, he should lose a point of Ba as quickly as every one or two years. On the other end of the scale, disappearing into a Tibetan monastery and meditating could prolong the Ba expenditure to every two or three decades. Most Mummies have some idea of this relationship between lifestyle and spirit release, but they tend to lead whatever lifestyle they prefer anyway, since they are accustomed to death and know that they'll be back to live again.

In addition to the natural loss of Ba, there are several other ways characters lose their spiritual energy. For example, the Magic chapter details some rituals that require the expenditure of Ba in addition to Sekhem to successfully perform. Also, extraordinarily traumatic events can cause the loss of a point of Ba. Physical trauma such as sustaining a Crippling or Incapacitating injury requires the character roll Stamina versus a difficulty of 7 or 9 respectively to avoid losing a point of Ba. Emotional trauma such as grief from losing a

loved one, venting a fierce hatred and other intense story scenes can be roleplayed and the player or Storyteller may opt for a loss of Ba.

In addition, whenever the character performs actions which would require a Vampire to check for Humanity loss (evil or inhumane actions), the character must roll his Love or Conscience Virtue against a difficulty decided by the Storyteller based on the severity of the heinous deed. If the character fails the roll, he loses a point of Ba.

The 9 Parts of the Soul

The exact beliefs of the ancient Egyptians with regards to the human body and soul are imperfectly understood by historians. As a culture, the Egyptians went through so many gods, goddesses, beliefs and rituals that it is difficult to sift through all the conflicting fragments to form a true picture. It makes for great gaming though, since there's a lot to pick and choose from.

In his translation of *The Book of the Dead*, E. Wallis Budge, one of the best known Egyptologists, identified nine distinct parts to the body and soul in which the ancients Egyptians believed.

1. **Khat** — the physical body
2. **Ka** — a spiritual double or personality which took the form of the human with which it was attached.
3. **Ba** — the soul which visited Ra in the afterworld and could revisit the physical body at any time.
4. **Ab** — the heart, thought to be the seat of consciousness, animal life and good or evil. It was weighed against a feather in the afterlife to judge the deceased.
5. **Khu** — the spiritual soul, the ethereal and immortal soul most analogous to the Christian equivalent.
6. **Sekhem** — power or vital force.
7. **Ren** — true name, an integral part of a human's existence.
8. **Khaibit** — the shadow, closely related to the Ba and perhaps a vessel for it.
9. **SÖhu** — spiritual body, an everlasting soul.

Many of the nine parts are essentially duplicates of one another in form or function, representing different time periods of Egyptian belief. In *A World of Darkness: Mummy*, only the Khat, Ka, Ba, Sekhem, and Ren are used for gaming. The Khu and SÖhu are considered elements of the person which pass on only in true death and are not used, while the Khaibit is used as a spell (see Magic Chapter).

Being Dead

When a Mummy dies, her physical body, or Khat, resembles any other corpse and will decay as such unless preserved through magic or technology (several Mummies

have credit at cryogenic banks these days). At death, the Mummy's Ba and Ka separate from the Khat and become individual spirit identities in the spirit realm.

If the character belongs to a player, he suddenly has two distinct forms to roleplay. The two spirit forms each have their own will and purpose. They are still the same person, and will never seriously dispute with each other, but are nevertheless each separate and individual.

The Ren, or true name, does not have any discernible presence even in the spirit world. It is an unseen, yet inherent and integral part of every facet of the Mummy's body and soul.

Ka

The Ka is the guardian spirit, charged with protecting the Khat while the Mummy is dead. It holds very little of the Mummy's intellectual capabilities, being somewhat single-minded in its watchdog function. The Ka spirit's appearance is that of a traditional ghost. In the spirit world, it takes the form of the deceased, but is a softly glowing translucent image. In the physical world, it is undetectable. Also like a ghost, the Ka cannot leave the basic proximity (500 meters) of the deceased body it is protecting.

The force or power of the Ka spirit is measured on a bubble track on the character sheet. It is in the Mummy's best interest to keep his Ka as strong as possible so that it is sufficiently powerful to fulfill its protective duties. Exercising any of the Ka's abilities requires the use of Ka energy.

The Ka can become visible in the physical world for short periods of time by spending one point of Ka. During its physical manifestation, the Ka is able to speak sporadically, but since it has a limited intellectual presence, its messages are often garbled and cryptic. The sudden appearance of the Ka is usually sufficient to scare away would-be tomb robbers.

The Ka can also leave the vicinity of the body by expending a point of Ka energy. It can wander for a few hours, moving through the spirit world at an incredible pace. If it does not return before its time is up, it must spend another point of Ka energy.

The Ka is the means by which the dead Mummy can manipulate the physical world. By expending a point of Ka force, the Mummy's spirit becomes semi-corporeal for a few minutes. While in this form, it has the same physical Attributes as the living character, allowing it to manipulate objects or even attack intruders. The only limitation is that the Mummy cannot use any physical attribute at a rating higher than his current Ka force. For example, a character with a Strength of 5 and a Ka score of 3 would only have an effective Strength of 3 when he manifests.

The danger of taking the semi-corporeal form is that the Ka can be injured in this form as well. For every health level that the character would normally lose as the result of an

injury, the Mummy instead loses a point of Ka. While in this semi-corporeal form, the Ka spirit moves about normally, appearing to walk, though it actually floats just above the ground.

If the Mummy's Ka force drops to zero, the spirit is disrupted. It will be nonexistent until the Mummy regains one point of Ka energy.

There are two ways for the Ka spirit to improve its force rating. The first is through experience, and the Mummy can spend experience to regain Ka.

The second method is through offerings. If someone sacrifices food and drink to the Mummy's spirit and the Mummy chooses to try to accept the offering, the Ka may gain a point of force. The person making the sacrifice must pass a Conscience Virtue roll against a difficulty of the Mummy's current Ka. A person can make only one attempt per year to honor the deceased in such a way.

If the sacrificial roll botches, the Ka spirit is in for difficult times. The sacrifice confuses the Ka, so that it no longer recognizes the deceased body it must protect. In a vain effort to continue its guardian duty, the Ka will seek to protect all that is dead or decaying by bringing it into itself. This leads to the Ka spirit wandering forth and consuming filth (dead animals, dung, rotting fruit, the walking dead, etc.). During this time, which may last days or weeks, the Ka spirit is not restricted to the proximity of the Khat. All told, the character will lose two points of Ka and a point of Ba.



The Ka can also be used against other spirits in combat, allowing the Mummy to roll one die per point against a difficulty set by the Storyteller which corresponds to the spirit's own power. Each success reduces the spirit's power by one, allowing the Mummy to control or destroy it after reducing it to 0.

Ba

The Ba is the soul or spirit of the Mummy, housing her emotions and intelligence. Upon physical death, the Ba spirit is freed from the Khat to roam the spirit worlds. The Ba's spiritual appearance is vaguely similar to the Khat, but shifts and pulses with an energy whose intensity depends on the Mummy's Ba rating.

The world that opens to the Ba upon death is the spirit realm and all of its forms. The realm holds the true form of everything that exists in the physical world, which is but a reflection of the spirit. Within the spirit realm, there are many spirit worlds which can also be personified as beings. These range from the Mother Earth, Gaia, to all of the ancient gods cultures have worshipped.

Travelers in the spirit realm, such as the Ba, can attempt to enter any of these spirit world entities. Within each spirit world, the laws of physics and reality may change dramatically, but there is always a theme or cohesive environment within any particular spirit world. For example, entering the

spirit world of Aphrodite, which was created by the minds and souls of the ancient Greeks, would be a world filled with sensuous passions and objects of incredible beauty.

The spirit realm and worlds are also inhabited by other spirits, either benevolent, malevolent or mischievous. These beings have their own wills and carry out their own purposes. The Mummy's Ba is similar to these spirits in many ways, since it is not connected to a physical body by a silver cord, as are spirits of the living. For spiritual combat, treat a Mummy's Ba rating as his Karma rating. The spirit worlds are the playground and battleground to many ancient, powerful beings and is of prime importance to those who manipulate the events leading to the Jihad.

For the Mummy to ever see physical life again, the Ba must recharge itself sufficiently to reenter the Khat and power it. There are many ways the character can gain Ba energy while in the spirit worlds. The primary way is by giving service to or making sacrifices to spiritual entities. These quests and sacrifices are mainly events of pure Storytelling and little dice rolling to be shared by the player(s) and Storyteller. Many require services of the character after he awakens to physical life. They are each unique, so no rules are presented for them. Below are some sample quests that might be good for one or two points of Ba.

Love — The character makes a pact with a spirit of love, such as Aphrodite, saying the character will love and cherish someone of extreme ugliness or who is unloved when the character is reborn. The spirit will grant the Ba, and heaven help the poor fool who does not keep her promise. There is no fury like that of a love goddess scorned.

The Barge — The character enters the service of the sun god Ra on his war barge as it sails across the night sky. Every night, the barge is attacked by the demon serpent Apophis and his minions in an attempt to keep the sun from rising the next day. The character's Ba spirit must prove itself in Courage and Melee before Ra will grant it spiritual energy. If the character does not succeed in her tests, she may suffer a spiritual wound resulting in Attribute loss or a small permanent wound, such as loss of a finger, that will remain with her physical body.

Guide — A benevolent spirit asks the character to guide a lost soul — a ghost — to rest. The character may have to first travel extensively with the ghost, revisiting scenes of its mortal life. The ghost may ask certain promises of the character as well, such as revenge or protection for loved ones left behind.

Lupine Lore — Some Garou tribes tell of places where Gaia's energy still burns bright, where a spirit can soak itself and renew its energy. The wolves may allow some of their young to help the character search for the fount in the spirit realm, in return for services or pacts from the character.

The time required for quests varies widely. The character will probably require a lot of time (downtime, usually not roleplayed) between quests to find another source of Ba. All



in all, the amount of time a character is dead depends mostly on the Storyteller's desire, how many points of Ba the character must rebuild, and how avidly the character wishes to return to physical life. Some Mummies prefer to live in the spirit worlds for extended periods of time.

Rebirth

Restoring the Body

Once the character has regained at least one point of Ba, or has a Ba score of 10, she may attempt to rejoin her Ba and Ka with her dead Khat. In order to be reborn, the character's physical body should be more or less complete. To accomplish this, the Ka may have to travel about collecting dismembered pieces and grouping them with the body.

The character can attempt a resurrection by rolling his Ba rating against difficulty 11 - Stamina. Any successes the character receives on this roll can be put towards reforming her body. Any health levels (including Extras) that the character's body suffered at the time of death must be repaired before the character is resurrected. For every success on the resurrection roll, the character must also spend a point of Ba in order to heal one health level of damage.

For example, Sahara is gunned down by Followers of Set. He effectively suffers two levels of injury past Incapacitated. Before he can come back to life, he must heal his body completely through successive attempts at resurrection. He will have to accumulate a total of nine successes on resurrection rolls and spend nine points of Ba in order to reform his body and then be reborn.

If the character suffers a nasty violent death, he will undoubtedly have to make several resurrection attempts and quest for more Ba energy between attempts. A violent death will not be the end of a Mummy character, but the player and Storyteller may decide that the game time required for the

character to regenerate himself effectively takes him out of the Chronicle. The player may opt to start another character (and take better care of the new one).

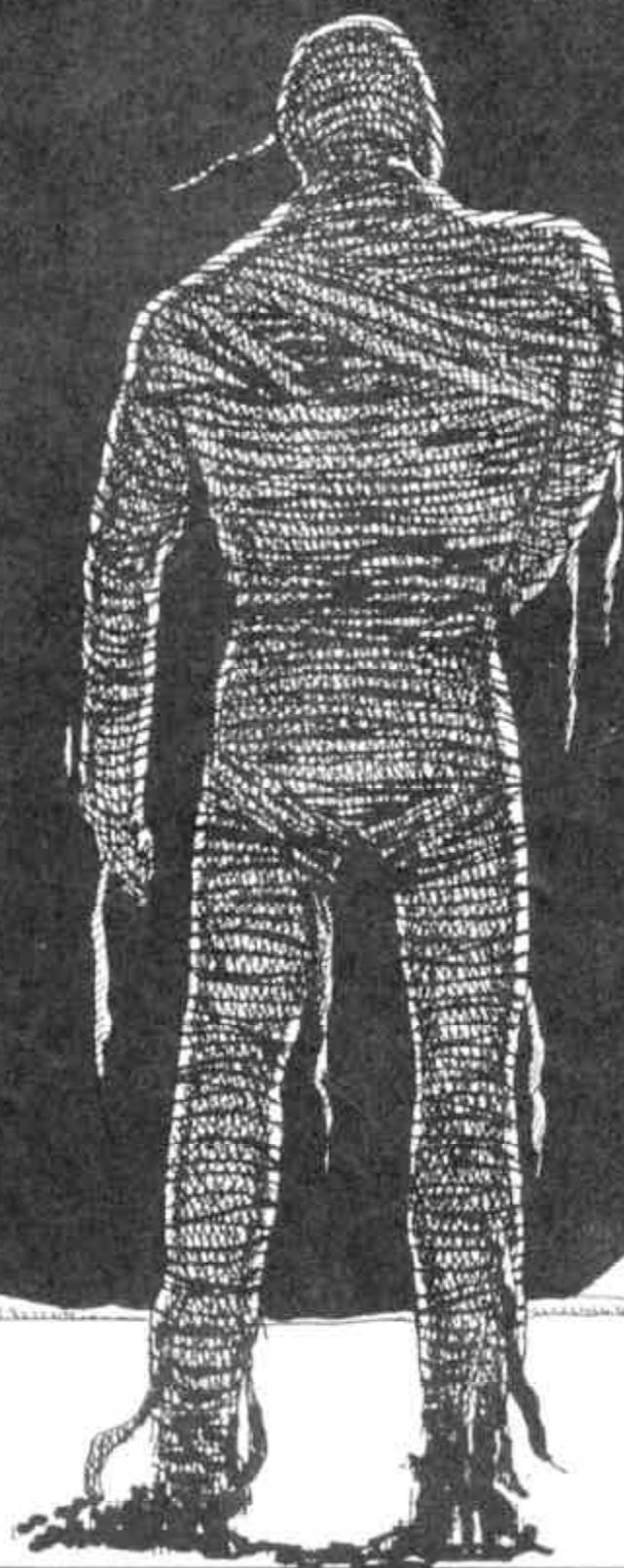
Enemies of the Mummies, such as the Followers of Set, have a good idea of what the Egyptian immortals must do to resurrect themselves, and the Followers will go to great lengths to destroy the Mummy's body when murdering a Mummy. However, there is a limit to the physical destruction which can be inflicted on the Mummy's body. For purposes of resurrection, the Mummy's body is never more than five health levels below Incapacitated. This would represent there being nothing but ashes left of the Khat, from which the Mummy must regrow his body. This is not a common habit of the Followers, since they usually find the grief they suffer at the hands of the Mummy's Ka and Ba doesn't make it worth their while to destroy the Mummy.

Amnesia

When a character is reborn, she must check each Skill or Knowledge rated higher than her Intelligence Attribute. For each such Ability, the player rolls Intelligence against difficulty 6. If the roll fails, the character loses one rating point in that Ability. The player must also make one general roll for memory loss against difficulty 6. The degree of failure or success is a general guideline to the Storyteller and player as to how much of the character's past she remembers. Characters with Intelligence Attributes of six or more through amulet magic are immune to this amnesiac effect.

Living

Once resurrected, the character is alive for all intents and purposes. Perhaps the only discernible difference is to Vampires. The blood of a living Mummy tastes stale and foul to a Vampire, and will provide the undead parasite with no sustenance (no Blood Points). Also, the Mummy's physical body does not age even as his Ba gradually wanes.



David Hockney

Chapter Four: Storytelling

Who can speak of eternity without a solecism, or think thereof without an ecstasy?

— Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*

I will now share with you my final lesson under Sahura's tutelage. It is where I learned the tale of Osiris and Set, the story of Isis and Anubis, and most of all, the tale of Horus. Unfortunately, like the fabled *Book of Nod* and the myths which that infamous lexicon has generated, the story of Osiris and Set most assuredly is not true in every detail. Rather, it is an oral account, so mixed with biases that it raises as many questions as it answers. The lesson is therefore a frustrating one, but also an exciting one, for it recounts ancient events which I have come to believe spawned two of the mightiest players in the Jyhad.

Sahura and I were sitting at a Parisian cafe down the street from the Arc de Triomphe. I was admiring the crowd and reveling in warmth from the evening Kiss' blood in my veins. Sahura was reading and rereading a correspondence which he had received through a peculiar courier that evening at our hotel.

The letter had come strapped to the leg of a magnificent hawk. The bird had dropped into our hotel room through the open terrace and perched itself on the bureau. Once Sahura had relieved it of its message, it gave me a piercing look, cried out, and then left the way it had come.

I sat patiently, toying with a cup of espresso and feigning sips periodically. Sahura finally set down the parchment and regarded me dourly.

"It's as I expected. We won't be going through Switzerland. I tried to arrange an audience with Horus for you, but such was not to be. His hatred hasn't changed."

My mind did not lock onto the name Horus when Sahura first said it. Rather, I keyed on his use of the word "audience." With the possible exception of Tchatcha-em-Önkh, Sahura had always treated his undead associates as peers and my meetings with them over the past decades had been reasonably friendly affairs. "Audience" carried an entirely new hierarchical connotation.

I lifted the letter from the table, and with his nod of approval read it for myself.

Sahu,

Your letter surprised me. I thought you had lost both the courage to communicate with me and the desire to enter into immortal affairs.

In response to your entreaty, I will decline. I am not available now, nor will I ever be available to speak with a Leech, even a fledgling. My position on that matter has not wavered since the time of my father.

If you continue in your endeavor to educate the young Kindred about Our existence, you are exposing yourself to potential doom. If one of my Jyhad peers decides that such dissemination is not constructive to his or her machinations, your existence will end.

Besides, your perceptions of events are so confined and filled with misconceptions that you will be providing the Vampire Neonates with an education of minimal value. You, like all of the Camarilla flock, are still guided by the illusion that the Jihad is a petty power struggle involving only the physical world that you and I currently inhabit. You have no grasp of the scope of the conflict, of Vampiric Golconda, or the threats posed to the realms of the Ba.

In many ways, I envy your simple position. Take care, countryman.

Horus

"Horus? Osiris and Set? I thought those were figures out of your mythology."

Sahura signaled "no" by closing his eyes slowly and reopening them.

"They are from history five millennia old. They were real, and still are. Calling them Gods and sons of Gods, however, as my land did in ancient times, is not so very far from truth. They were visible before humanity for but a single generation, yet their brief performance on that stage drew such awe that they were worshipped as gods for 3,000 years, and their names have endured in human literature to this day. Thus was their might."

"Who are they? Are they like you?"

"Edward, you must hear the tale of Osiris and Set. But, since I've lived three lives since it was last told to me, I shall not relate it for you. We will end our journey, and your lessons as to the nature of my kind, back in my homeland. There is a man there as old as Horus, a man of my kind, who will tell the story of our Gods."

Two nights hence I was driving an abysmal little car down a narrow strip that Sahura maintained was indeed a road. We had chartered a flight from France to a village outside Cairo and then gone overland from there. We were somewhere, be it the middle of nowhere, in the Nile Valley. I doubt I could find the place again.

During our travel, Sahura was taciturn. I pried him with questions but received few responses. He was reticent to speak more about Horus until I had heard the tale from the one we were now traveling to see — a gentleman named Mestha — who Sahura maintained was the oldest Mummy in both real and apparent years.

Our travels ended in a farming town made quiet in the early morning. Under Sahura's guidance we left the car and walked for several miles. We left the town before turning off the main road and taking a side lane towards a small house in the fields. Sahura continued walking past the small farmhouse and into the fields of wheat. I followed him down to the banks of the Nile where Mestha stood gazing at the stars.

In the moonlight reflecting off the Nile, I could see that Mestha was an old, scrawny man with dark skin and a bald head. Sahura spoke to him in what I could now recognize as an ancient Egyptian dialect. Mestha's only response was to

turn and regard us. My eyes locked onto his face, weathered beyond mortal causes, with deep furrows in his cheeks and forehead. Set amid impossibly wrinkled skin, Mestha had the most beautiful and loving eyes I had ever seen. I was mesmerized by the ancient spiritual power and benevolence in those eyes. We studied one another for several minutes before Sahura spoke again and I recognized my name amid his dialect speech.

Mestha smiled easily, his cheeks fitting into cheery grooves formed from thousands of years of happy countenances. He waved us toward the house and began walking. I followed while Sahura lingered for a moment to reminisce with the eternal river before joining us.

Mestha led us into his home, as spartan and simple on the inside as it had appeared from the lane. He showed me to a seat next to an iron stove. Our entrance stirred a little noise, and woke someone sleeping in the bedroom adjoining the room where we sat. Yawning and wiping sleep from her eyes, a woman of inestimable beauty stepped through the doorway from the bed chamber. Beneath her night garments, I could see the curves of youthful flesh. Her dark eyes and exquisite face were framed by rich black hair which ran in free waves down her back. I was entranced by this dusky-skinned Venus.

She spoke to Mestha, seeming to ask a question. The old man responded casually and waved her back into the bedroom. She answered him and went back to her bed.

I turned to Sahura and whispered, "Who is she?"

"Mestha's wife," he replied, and then chuckled as confusion spread across my face.

Sahura turned and spoke with Mestha, while I recovered my composure. I must admit it was hard to take my mind off of the woman in the next room, whose soft breaths calmed into the regularity of sleep. I had the Hunger.

Sahura succeeded in persuading Mestha to tell his story, though since the old man could not speak English, Sahura was forced to translate the story to me. I will now recount the story for you as it was told to me. The whole of it is from Mestha's perspective, which sadly leaves out several elements of the narrative which would be invaluable.

Additionally, the story suffered long pauses Sahura later told me resulted from the teller battling his memory to dredge forth the correct details. My friend said all Mummies suffer a form of amnesia regarding events of their past lives, and for someone as old as Mestha, the effects could be dire.

The Story of Osiris and Set

As told by Mestha to Edward Hollister, May, 1972.

Like my ancestors before me, I was a farmer of the Lower Nile. My family had dwelt on the river's delta for generations beyond our counting. We were governed by a lineage of chieftains to whom we paid a tribute of crops, but the Nile was

our true dictator. Its floods and droughts controlled our lives far more intimately than our chieftains, who supported us once a generation against Asiatic raiders.

That was the existence I knew until my sons had sons, and my life was taking its last turns. During that time, our chieftain fell ill and died. His son, a strong youth named Osiris, took his father's title and possessions.

Immediately upon young Osiris' ascension, there were rumors of infighting in the ruling household. It was said Osiris' younger brother, Set, was bent on taking the mantle of leadership from his older sibling. Their political squabbling ended with Osiris banishing Set from the Lower Kingdom. Set was taken to the western desert beyond the sun's evening rest and let loose, never to show his face to the Egyptian sun again.

To add insult to his brother, Osiris claimed Nephthys, Set's wife and their sister, as his own mate. Through Nephthys — some say by love, others say by rape — Osiris sired a son who was named Anubis. Through his other sister, Isis, Osiris sired another son named Horus. With his wives and progeny, Osiris began a troublesome rulership of the delta.

The eternal cycle of affairs and the stable borders of the land he now ruled never pleased Osiris. He marshaled the able men of the delta and marched repeatedly on the less-civilized folk of the Upper Nile, meeting with little success in his ventures. Several years of this led to unhappiness in the kingdom. Many people, myself included, lost loved ones in these fruitless advances. My eldest son perished in one campaign, and my second eldest was an officer in the army, so I constantly feared for his life as well.

Then my daughter, who lived in the city, told me a very strange man had entered the court of our chieftain and held council with Osiris late at night. No one knew the origins of the stranger, but rumors abounded that he was a god, come to aid our chieftain. When rumors spread that the stranger killed palace servants and desiccated their bodies, the stories changed so that the stranger was now a demon Osiris had struck a deal with to ensure success in battle.

After four moons waxed and waned, the stranger left, and the palace was no longer the same. The chieftain was struck ill for several days and all thought he would die. I know now that he did. He became a creature like you, Edward, only not nearly as refined or so ... so basically human. He was driven, even ruled, by passions for blood and conquest. I believe it is admissible for children to be carefree and ruled by their own desires, but when a grown man is ruled by his most basic desires, he becomes evil.

Osiris was our ruler, and he was all-powerful to us. He displayed new abilities of such vast magical power that he instantly became known as a god. He claimed to control the eternal river itself, and indeed that season and for several thereafter, the Nile was tame and the lands plentiful. Thus Osiris became known as the god of fertile fields.



With this prosperity, no one put much stock in the blood sacrifices Osiris took in his nightly courts. None noticed how our little nation was mustering an army of disproportionate might. My son told stories of Osiris sharing his own blood with an elite cadre of men, who were in turns both the royal guards and the crack troops on the battlefield. My son told of how a few of these guards were taken by Osiris and made into the king's image.

Osiris no longer dreamt of conquest to the south, so our chariots rode east against Asia. I believe the stranger had played Osiris for a fool and a pawn, giving him enough might to threaten the Asians on their flank. I still do not know the true political machinations that were involved, but at the time I suspected that my country was being used as a piece on the game board of the gods.

As for the rest of the royal family, I believe they remained human, though Isis and Nephthys and their sons each displayed some talent for magic. Isis especially became known as a witch of great power, and she was loved for the charitable miracles she worked.

As I recall, we passed three years under this state of affairs. Our armies marched well into Asia, and my son grew quickly in rank, bringing honor to his family (here Mestha broke from the narrative to describe his son's private heroics in some detail. I have omitted the accounts, though some were truly impressive — as Mestha recalled them. Edward).

As an elderly man, these drastic changes in events were an unpleasant break in life's stability, so when Set returned from the western deserts, I was poorly prepared for the pace of change, especially for their growing involvement with my own life.

Set. The name has rightly come to reek of evil, manipulation and despair. Whatever transpired to the boy in his desert wasteland banishment created a man of unnatural cunning and total lack of human love. Some, including those who knew him best, later said that what returned was not Set at all, but a demon masquerading as the lost prince. In any event, he had become superior to Osiris in bloodlust, power and desires.

Set planned his return to the court of Egypt with exquisite care. Osiris had just returned from an Asian campaign. He was weary and nearly destroyed after a titanic battle with a creature my son described as half-man and half-hyena, which smote Osiris with great magics and powerful spirits. (A lupine? Perhaps this tale became confused with Set and led to the symbolic representation of Set as part man and part dog. Edward). At great cost, Osiris triumphed against the beast-thing, but his reward was a return to a court sown with wickedness and ripe with treachery.

Several of his seemingly loyal servants presented him with a golden sarcophagus shaped especially to the chieftain's body, to assure him pleasant slumber. When Osiris lay down to rest, the cover was thrown and locked. Set appeared from the form of a court snake and magically sealed the box.

Then there ensued a great battle between Set and his servants, who had infiltrated the court, and Osiris' own loyal guardsmen. The battle was great, but sadly short. Osiris' men were as sacks of wheat to be thrown about by the powerful Set. Few of Osiris' faithful escaped.

After the clash, Set's minions wrapped Osiris' sarcophagus prison in lead bindings and took it to the Nile's mouth. There it was taken out to sea and dumped in deep waters. However, another story holds that the sarcophagus was not dumped, but rather taken to a court in Asia, where allies of Set watched over Osiris in his prison.

Set took absolute control over the land. Isis and Horus escaped him, but Nephthys was not so lucky. Though her son Anubis was saved and spirited away, Set claimed his former mate. There was soon trouble of some sort between the couple, presumably because Nephthys refused to share Set's accursed state (here Mestha apologized to me and reminded me that the Vampiric state of these primal beings was somewhat different from my own. Edward). In rage, Set slew Nephthys. The country mourned, and the anger of the heavenly house was brought to bear on the evil usurper.

Word came to me from riverboatmen that Isis had succeeded in spiriting away Osiris' sarcophagus from whatever watery or unearthly domain held it. She was to free Osiris, but Set discovered the act and interrupted the resurrection. In a rage, Set cast open Osiris' prison and set upon the motionless



body within, rending the chieftain's form into hundreds of pieces. These he ordered to be cast out about the breadth of the delta, where they would languish in the darkest corners of our land. Osiris' living country would be his hereafter as well.

The evil one captured Isis and Horus, binding them magically and with restraints. They were taken to Set's palace to suffer unspeakably for the evil god's amusement. It was here that Set plucked out young Horus' eye and with it stole the man's Ba, trapping it in the stolen organ. Horus' body became like a dry reed, with Isis constantly administering magics to it so the body would not perish.

This transpired for too long, with none brave enough to resist Set, until my son returned from the fields of Asia. Still an officer in the army, and loyal in his heart to the queen, not the treacherous usurper, he freed Isis and Horus in a heroic escape from Set's fortress.

Now my son was brave, but also headstrong. He could not flee all the way to Nubia without being found by Set's minions, so he brought Isis and Horus to the only other place he could imagine — my home. I, an old farmer looking forward to dying, became an outlaw on my own land.

But the sight of the queen and the body of her son swept away worries and self-pity. My son had followed his heart to free them. He assured me Isis' magic would shield them from Set's scrutiny, but we must make preparations to hide them from search parties. Meanwhile, my son traveled on in an attempt to mislead the pursuit. The last I heard, my son was captured entering the Upper Nile and put to death.

My family protected our charges zealously. We made provisions to hide them on the rare occasions when soldiers or taxmen would call on the farm. In return, we saw Isis return to full health, though her lamentations over her son were beyond our power to solve. The queen did repay our kindness with small favors, blessing our crops and our animal stock. For these and for the other spells which kept her son alive, she sent my grandchildren scavenging far and wide for exotic materials.

One night, my young granddaughter woke me and, leading me by the hand, took me out to the shelter where Isis and Horus were hidden. Isis called for me and I went to her side as she mended her son's vacant eye socket, a source of never-ending blood loss. She told me her spells to keep her son alive were slowly failing, and soon she feared the young man's body would stop. With his Ba sucked out of his heart and trapped by Set in the lost eye, Horus would never find the Elysian Fields. I must help her; I must be brave.

The next morning, after Ra dragged the sun into the sky and Set had shut his eyes, Isis called to Anubis. She took the chance that her message would not be heard by Set in his dreams as he slumbered through the day, but the time for risks had come. Anubis answered, and commenced his journey to join Isis at my farmland from whatever hiding place he had taken.

Two days hence, Anubis arrived. He was a stout young man of considerable wisdom for one of his age. At first, he spoke constantly of slaying the evil one for the murder of Nephthys, Anubis' mother, but when he heard the hoarse rasps of life left in Horus' body, he began working with Isis.

For three days my children and grandchildren were sent running to market and to the fields for various animals, ointments and plants. For three days Isis and Anubis argued and conjectured over the spirit world and how to save Horus. Finally, they decided on their formula, and Isis approached me.

"Wise and old one, your years will catch you in but a few seasons. When I am gone, no one will stop the pain in your joints, or the cramps inside. Your life can yet have one more great purpose. We must know if our formula is correct. We must test it upon someone else. Your reward, if we succeed, will be immense."

I could not refuse my queen's request. I bid farewell to my family, and went with the two magicians into the hidden shelter.

They killed me. Anubis fed me a cup of poison which numbed my body and stilled my heart. Death is exciting, especially now in my span, after I have experienced it more times. The first time, when I was a virgin at death, it was sudden and frightening. But once your Ka walks from your body, and your Ba passes into the spirit worlds, you experience a complete freedom, and all fear is gone. Then I did not control my Ka very well, so what transpired about my dead body, I cannot say.

My next experience outside the spirit worlds was a calling from Isis. She was hailing me back into her world. There was an awful jolting which shook the fiber of my being, and I was back. My soul had taken death's journey for the first time.

Isis and Anubis were much relieved at my safe return. They spoke of successful spirit shifts and opening the door between worlds with their magic. They seemed intent on killing Horus' body in such a way that his Ba could always return to it. They spoke with utmost concern of how they would ever free his Ba from its optical prison in Set's hands. However, they were resigned to do what they could, and that included killing Horus.

I was very weak, and their magics had visibly tired both Anubis and Isis. However, they were intent upon completing their work. They labored for the rest of the day and into the evening before Horus' body gave its final rasping breath and lay still. While Isis and Anubis slept, my daughters wrapped Horus' body in linens. Such simple funeral fittings for the son of a chieftain.

At dawn, I broke fast with Isis and Anubis. Having temporarily saved Horus, they schemed on how to slay the usurper and recover Horus' Ba. I quickly gathered that they had no idea how to slay a demon such as Set. Their only conclusion therefore, was to once again recall Osiris and hope the former lord could best Set. The idea evidently

appalled them; their loathing of Osiris was both evident and surprising to me. They were committed to trade one demon for another as long as Anubis had revenge and Isis restored her son. I asked them if Set would know of their attempts to revive Osiris, as he had when Isis raised the god from his watery prison. Most certainly the evil one would know, Anubis told me, and the youth bade me to send my family away to safer dwellings.

I sent my family away as the young lord said, but I remained behind. I could not leave my land, and the affair had become very personal to me. I was content to gamble with my life to see the outcome of the mortal magicians as they faced Set.

Isis began a ritual as Ra rode off the world's western edge. When night fell, she had already summoned flocks of waterbirds and sent them soaring over the Nile delta. Each returned with a scrap of gristle, a dried bone or some worm-eaten remain. Each piece was piled into a small heap of rotten debris.

Meanwhile, Anubis had contacted the remaining servants of Osiris and bade them come from hiding and ready themselves to face Set. These servants, demons all of them, began to arrive at my farm.

When Isis had finished her magic, and Osiris' corporeal remnants were heaped in a pile, Anubis led my ox over to the pile, and with my best knife, cut the beast's throat. The ox was spellbound and did not move or make a sound; it simply stood over the pile of corporeal remains, gushing blood from its veins. As the blood soaked into the pile, the servants of Osiris cut their own wrists and added drops of their own blood to the bath. Isis stood among them incanting a spell of powerful necromancy to call Osiris' soul back from the netherworlds.

Slowly the dark magic took its effect. The bone began to knit, the skin regrew, and the body of Osiris rose up. While still a half living thing, it gasped out "He is coming, my brother comes for us."

When the ox had finally collapsed, Osiris lay on the ground. He was a blackened, feeble thing. Isis and Anubis, as well as the many servants, became agitated. Anubis called to my dog and spellbound it as he had the ox. He took it to Osiris, but the chieftain waved it away feebly. Anubis looked back at Isis in concern, and then Osiris was upon him. The blackened thing rose up with unnatural speed and grasped the young man. Teeth the size of daggers flashed from its skeletal mouth and plunged into Anubis' neck. The young prince choked once and then collapsed as the father feasted upon the son. Isis screamed in horror. I was sick.

When I recovered from the nausea, Osiris was standing tall, blood bathing his bare and muddy chest. He laughed aloud at Isis who had begun to weep, and then his gaze swept across to me. His eyes blazed and my limbs responded. My lord was hungry still, and I would feed him. My limbs moved me toward him like a sleepwalker, my mind was flooded with dreams of youthful pleasures and boyhood memories.

When I was but a few paces from him, my reverie was interrupted. Directly above us was a loud crack of thunder, and something flew into Osiris, knocking him to the ground. The shock of the collision threw me aside so that I tripped over the dead ox and fell. On my back, gazing into the sky, I saw them all descend from the sky like a flock of carrion birds. Set and his followers had arrived.

From behind the ox, I watched as Osiris and Set fought. There was a titanic struggle amid the clashing of their progeny. The two gods transformed from one shape to another, their bodies flowing like water into one form or its nemesis. Set became a great snake, Osiris grew the talons of a hawk. Over and over the pair rolled. Set punched a taloned hand deep into Osiris' back, then all of the evil one's hair burst aflame.

I heard Isis calling names of magical power to aid Osiris. I myself threw the slaughtering knife at the evil one, but the weapon bounced off his skin as if it had struck a block of stone. The struggle was between the two gods, and gradually Osiris' weakness began to show. The fertility god was still tired and spent. Finally, Set lifted him high in the air and hurled him at my house. Midway through the air, Osiris' body burst into flame so that he struck the house like a star from heaven. The tiny structure collapsed on him and began to smolder and flame. The entire heap quickly became a bonfire, consuming Osiris' broken body.

"Curse you brother, for taking my son," Isis wailed at Set.

The demon turned to her. The battlefield had already broken as Osiris' minions fled and were chased down by Set's followers. Set faced his sister and slowly advanced on her "Is this what you want sister?" he taunted, rolling a human eye between his fingers. "I don't recall you being very supportive of me when I was banished. Would you like to court my favors now?"

Isis began to name every malevolent force in her power. The ground shook and swelled beneath Set. The heavens roared, bathing Set in thunderbolts, and still Isis continued her litany. Set finally broke free, reached out and slapped her, breaking her jaw and tossing her to the ground.

"Your magics are nothing. What god would bow down to a mortal woman? I command now, and you, sister, will join Nephthys."

After 5,000 years, my mind still holds the next detail of the story with the greatest clarity. The eyeball which Set held in his hand turned and focused on the evil one, as if the organ had a will of its own. Indeed it must have — the will of Horus.

Then beside Set stood the avenger himself, barely corporeal in his Ka form. He was dressed in battle finery with a patch over his missing eye and a great knife in his hands. He hacked into Set, shearing off the usurper's phallus with the first stroke. The second stroke split the eyeball, rupturing the tiny organ. Horus was prepared for another blow, but with the

freeing of his Ba, his spirit form was disrupted and he disappeared. Only his voice lingered, promising final doom for Set.

Sadly, my story must end here. Osiris was slain and burned completely. Set abducted Isis as well as Horus' body. The Evil One soon left our country, his vengeance complete and his true trials just beginning. I believe he sought to find out Horus' secret, my secret, Sahara's secret, through Isis and through Horus' remains. He must have been afraid of Horus' eventual return, or perhaps he saw the magic as a means to spread his evil and power beyond death itself. Eventually, Isis must have succeeded in passing the secret of her magic on, though the next of our kind to receive the spell lived a thousand years later.

As for myself, I lived out my years in relative peace, for Set never knew the magic performed on me, and saw me as nothing but the lowliest pawn in the game, fit only to be ignored. I died again and began the real cycle of rebirth that has seen me through the history of this ancient land. I have never left her boundaries, but then I've never needed to leave to find happiness.

"Do you know any of the ritual which gave you eternal life? You're the only one I know who has witnessed it and not just received it at death?"

"No, Edward. I do not remember it. I don't think I would like that power. I'm no magician, except for one charm which I have used to keep my household satisfied through the years."

"What is that?" I asked.

He smiled cheerfully and held up the mummified remains of something Set had left on Mestha's property ages ago.

The Eternal War

The information below is given to provide the Storyteller with a frame of reference for creating stories about Mummies. The information is known in bits and pieces by different Mummies, all of whom have slightly different versions and biases about the events and the people involved.

The history of Mummies picks up where Mestha's tale leaves off. Some of this information, filled with inaccuracies, is known to the Camarilla — see **The Players Guide** and also **The Hunters Hunted**. Note that few Vampires of the Camarilla know of the existence of Mummies.

The Remaining History of Set and Horus

Mestha's story ends when Set slew Osiris. After this fratricide, Set returned to his throne, but gave it up shortly thereafter, preferring to rule behind puppets and pawns. As

Egypt became stronger and its population grew, more and more Kindred came to the area, until by 3000 B.C. Set knew his days as strongman were numbered.

Set's influence over Egyptian politics quickly drew to an end upon the return of Horus to the living. Directly after his murder of Osiris, Set had reimprisoned Isis at the palace in the city that would one day be Alexandria. Set tried all means at his disposal to understand the necromancy which Isis and Anubis had worked on Horus' body, but was unsuccessful. Continually harried by Horus' Ka, Set finally freed Isis and with her, the body of Horus.

Upon her release, Isis gathered a cult of magicians to her, and taught them her magic — especially the Spell of Life. She wanted someone to know the magic in case Horus did not awaken before she died, and there were complications with his resurrection. Isis herself passed away, not wanting the curse of immortality for herself.

Horus resurrected himself hundreds of years later, when he could no longer stand for Set's manipulation of Egyptian nobility. When Horus awoke, he regathered and strengthened the Cult of Isis. Horus and the wizards then began a systematic destruction of Set's progeny and severed Set's magical domination of the Egyptian nobility. Many of the Cult died, but they succeeded in breaking Set's hold over Egypt.



Millennia passed during which Horus and Set continued their power struggle over Egypt, their mutual hatred growing all the while. During this struggle, Horus quickly realized that the Cult of Isis, comprised of mortal wizards, could not endure as could Set's immortal progeny, so Horus instructed the Cult to revive the Spell of Life and create more immortals with the ritual. The Cult accepted the mission and sought out a few select men and women of Egypt who could be eternal champions of truth. They found Egyptians of distinction from all stations of life and bequeathed upon them the Spell of Life as they died.

This practice went well for several generations, until Horus began his next death cycle. Seizing the opportunity, Set, the master of corruption, began to manipulate the Cult of Isis in extremely discreet ways. The end result was that the cult began to select its champions more by personal, political or theological preferences than strictly by the quality of the individual. During this era, many were selected who were something less than noble of heart and some were chosen completely at random.

When Horus returned to life, he reaffirmed discipline in the Cult, showing them the devious ways which Set had begun to turn them from their path. The resulting discipline within the cult made their future selection process incredible rigid, to such an extreme that only a single man or woman was selected each century.

Horus and Set's battle for Egypt ended around 950 B.C., when Horus, allied with foreigners from the west, drove Set out of Egypt, killing all of the Corrupter's progeny. For the second time in his life, Set was banished into the deserts.

But an Antediluvian is a difficult force to contain. In his banishment, Set perfected his own occult and Vampiric disciplines. He created a new family of progeny, and bound them into an organization of strict hierarchy. The real Followers of Set were created.

Sometime near the turn of the ages, while Horus was dead, Set and his Followers had enough of the Cult of Isis and the expanding roster of immortals which the cult had created. Set and his Followers took the wizards by force, slaughtering all except one man who they deceived into revealing the Spell of Life — or so Set believed.

Anxious to finally use the necromancy he had been denied for 4,000 years, Set selected some of his mortal followers to test the Spell of Life. What actually transpired was a woeful perversion of the ritual, partially due to errors put in by the short-lived Cult of Isis magician and partially due to Set's corruption of the magic in his desire to bind the immortals created by the spell.

The five men and two women who were subjected to the ritual became Bane Mummies. Seeing the magnificently depraved beings he had created, Set named them after the traditional manifestations of Apophis, the Egyptian devil serpent.

The knowledge of the true Spell of Life is known only by Horus, and Set is the sole keeper of his own twisted form of the ritual.

When Horus resurrected in A.D. 132, he left Egypt and made the Alps his stronghold. Set in turn, disappeared from the world in 33 B.C. Horus and Set still battle one another, but it is no longer over control of Egypt — they have moved on to more important struggles. They battle on all the stages of the Jihad, Set directing his Followers from hibernation, and Horus using the aid of powerful spirits and the forty-three Mummies created by the Spell of Life to oppose Set's purposes in both the physical and the spirit world.

Children of Osiris

Only one of Osiris' progeny survived the final conflict with Set and his followers on Mestha's farm. Unknown to the Followers of Set, a Vampire named Khetamon escaped the destruction experienced by his master and siblings. Khetamon was a philosopher and magician in the court of Osiris who was made a Kindred by his pharaoh. Instead of reveling in his new-found power, Khetamon was wise enough to see the depravity of the soul that waited at the end of his new immortal existence. Determined not to begin the spiritual metamorphosis into a darker being, Khetamon began to philosophize as to the nature of his new existence and how to curb the desires which would be his destruction.

Set interrupted this pursuit when he took control of the land of Egypt, killing or scattering the progeny of Osiris. Khetamon fled into the Upper Nile until he was called back by Anubis to Mestha's farm. There he lent his own magical abilities to Isis, and helped cast the Rebirth ritual upon Osiris. Khetamon was left for dead after being struck down in the ensuing battle. Set's followers left the crippled progeny of Osiris where they lay, knowing the sun would destroy their remains. However, while his brothers burned to ash as the sun rose, Khetamon was able to remain awake due to his grasp on Humanity and drag himself deep into the shelter of Mestha's barn, where he was able to drink a goat's blood to regain enough strength to burrow into the earth.

Khetamon knew Set's minions would destroy him on sight, so he fled Africa, not stopping until he reached India. There he continued his spiritual pursuits to rise above his Vampiric state. He vowed never to beget more of his kind — never to spread his disease to others. Slowly he began to gather Vampires who were themselves wastrels, and founded the Children of Osiris.

Once Khetamon was confident that his growing Sect was following the correct path, he isolated himself from them to expand upon the Disciplines necessary to sustain his purity of spirit as he grew older. These in turn he handed down to the Children, and they became the Discipline of Bardo.

When Khetamon returned from isolation to teach Bardo, he also saw the growing power of the Followers of Set in the world. He realized the self-imposed isolation which he and

his Sect enjoyed was an exercise in selfishness. There were mortals and immortals who were suffering from the corruption of Set. Khetamon called upon the Children of Osiris to clandestinely begin their assault on the Followers of Set, and all other Vampires who actively embraced the Beast within.

Currently, Khetamon is in torpor, presumably searching for even higher Disciplines of Bardo which will grant an end to Vampiric existence. His personal history, as a progeny of Osiris, has become muddled in the teachings of the Sect. Many Children of Osiris now believe that Khetamon is Osiris and that he will soon return to resurrect them from their undead state back to a mortal existence.

On Storytelling

This chapter consists of the details which tie Mummies into a Storytelling Chronicle. The material is a potpourri of topics including theme, storytelling techniques, sample characters and a few Story outlines.

Theme

Not every story has a theme. Sometimes, a light fantasy is a wonderfully pleasant escape. Some roleplaying sessions will undoubtedly be escapist, because roleplaying is a great mental departure into the fantastic.

However, if we really want to experience a story at an emotional level, then it's got to have a theme. The purpose of the Storytelling games is to help create and tell stories with a theme. If we enjoy the hobby of roleplaying and spend time with it, let's not settle for simple escapism. Instead, we can vicariously experience the emotions that tell us about ourselves. Not all education is facts and formulas — there's an education about being human beings, a right-brained learning that comes from reading literature, experiencing drama and even storytelling.

Every story will have a different theme, but here are some of the themes which work well with Mummy characters and the stories about them.

1. **Loss.** The cycle of birth and death constantly removes Mummies from the people and things they have grown to love. For example, one Mummy who was developed in the playtest Chronicle, a man named Khallaf, eloped with a desert Faerie princess during his second life. Now, when he lives, he is consumed with love for her and she for him, but her father rages at the sight of him and has killed Khallaf on several occasions. Every time he dies, he loses touch with his Faerie lover until he is reborn again. His cycle of birth and death is also a cycle of love and loss.

2. **Meaning of Life.** A Mummy character's chosen Nature is of vital importance to theme. Mummies have lived millennia and have witnessed the rise and fall of civilizations. They have seen millions fade from human memory while a dozen make it into the pages of history. Inevitably, Mummies have

a deep crisis concerning the meaning behind their existence and the existence of human life. To a large degree, their Nature determines how they choose to carry on their immortal lives. Some believe life has no meaning, so they enjoy every temporal pleasure to the fullest, becoming hedonistic. Others who find no meaning to it all become deeply cynical, even to the point of manic-depression. A few become afraid to face what they believe to be the truth — that there is no meaning — so they hide from it by creating legacies of fame. Others rise above these and try to bring purpose to their lives through learning, or charity and compassion.

3. **Revenge.** Everyone thinks about getting back at someone, or even at society in general, for the tragedies of life. Anger is easier than grief, so it soothes the sorrow if we can place blame on someone for life's misfortunes.

Mummies act on a supernatural stage with Vampires, the Garou, Faeries and the like. Their immortal lives are occasionally marked by severe tragedy brought on by another immortal or an entire society. They devote themselves to age-long pursuits of exacting vengeance on the enemy.

A good variation to the theme of vengeance is the character who falsely sets the blame for tragedy on another, perhaps to hide from herself that her loss is her own fault. Only when she accomplishes her vengeance does she realize the hollow truth she has pursued.



4. Megalomania. Ancient Egypt was a land surrounded by natural barriers of water, desert and mountains. In predynastic Egypt, few had any idea there were other lands or other kingdoms with their own kings. For the common person, Egypt was the entire world and the pharaoh its divine, peerless ruler. The few pharaohs who were made Mummies were the supreme beings of their age. Losing this prestige and power does not come easily for some. Even after 4,000 years, some would jump at the chance to reclaim it, Masquerade or no.

Storytelling Techniques

The Vampire and Werewolf rules describe several advanced storytelling techniques. Many of these techniques fit especially well into Mummy stories. In particular, the techniques of flashback and parallel stories are extraordinarily effective. Begin a session by roleplaying events from 1,000 years ago. The players have little or no idea why the ancient events are relevant to the main story, which picks up in modern times. Slowly, as the suspense builds, the players realize that not only were their characters part of the ancient events, forgotten due to rebirth amnesia, but the ancient events are directly related to the story of revenge or discovery taking place in their era.

Other techniques particularly relevant to ancient Egyptians is that of dream sequences and the use of dreams to foreshadow events. The Egyptians were true believers in the power of dreams and vision prophecy. No sorceress in her right mind would ignore her dreams. Of course, the players may not realize they are entering the tragic events they have foreseen in their dreams until they are right in the middle of the event.

The World of the Mummies

In most Vampire supplements, the history of Clans, Elders and the Jihad is cryptic at best. This is done mainly to reflect the fact that Vampire Neonates are really in the dark when it comes to their true history and the power plays going on around them. While most Vampires know little about their origins and their powerful Elders, Mummies know, relatively, quite a lot.

Bane Mummies

There are seven Bane Mummies: Tutu the Doubly Evil One, Hemhemti the Roarer, Amam the Devourer, Qetu the Evil Doer, Hau-hra of the Backward Face, Saatet-ta, Darkener of the Earth, and Kharebutu the Fourfold Fiend. Qetu and Saatet-ta are women; the rest are men.

All Banes are cursed by the perverted ritual of eternal damnation and eternal life cast upon them by Set himself. Except for a few important differences, Banes are similar to any other Mummy character. When they die, the Ba of Bane

Mummies do not roam the spirit world. Instead, they are immediately sucked into the spirit world of Apophis — into Hell. There they must stay until they are released by the spirit to be reborn.

As a result of the unspeakable tortures and insanities which they have suffered during their many deaths and imprisonments in Apophis, all Bane Mummies are themselves insane, with no remaining conception of compassion or humanity. Banes have Social Attribute ratings of zero.

During their living moments, the Banes carry out the unspeakable deeds which Apophis and his demons have commanded them to perform. The Banes also receive instruction from Set and his Followers, though this often involves pacts between Set and Apophis. Set is loath to make more Banes, seeing them as difficult pawns to control, and more under the control of Apophis than himself.

Banes make an excellent enemy to Mummies and Lupines alike, since they serve Set as well as one of the guises of the Great Wyrm. Also, their perversities and involvement as Set's pawns in the Jihad will naturally pit them against Vampires. The individual Banes vary in abilities and level of power. Some are violently, psychotically insane, while others appear more devious and rational at a surface level.

All of the Bane Mummies have grossly distorted physical bodies. For example, Hau-hra of the Backward Face does indeed have his face on the back of his head, but his elbows and knees are double jointed, allowing 180 degrees of motion so that he may move forward or back, no matter how you define the two directions.

Amam the Devourer

Amam's given name is thought to be lost in antiquity, though Set occasionally threatens the Banes with knowledge of their true names. He was a mortal priest who served the Followers of Set, enjoying the life of wealth and power he built through blackmail, aided by the Followers. His mortal days ended, and his eternal nightmare began, when Set selected him to be one of seven to receive the horrible miracle which created the Banes.

Upon his rebirth, Set named him Amam the Devourer, a most apt title. Amam's body is that of a powerfully muscular man, except for his jaws. His jawbone and teeth are malformed and preposterously massive. In addition to its abnormal size, his jawbone also detaches and extends like a snakes, so that Amam can swallow things his own size (the process takes about an hour for something so large to be digested). In combat, Amam's bite has difficulty 5, and does Strength + 3 Damage. To swallow an opponent, Amam must first grapple her until she is immobilized, and then bite her every turn.

Amam's missions for Set and Apophis are assassinations (often there's no body found when the Devourer is done) and recovery of lost or desired goods. Amam has remarkably acute senses, especially smell. His weakness is his other mental faculties. He is easily tricked and often forgets the

goals of his mission, so Set usually directs his Followers to accompany and direct Amam on his missions — they aim him and then unleash him to let Amam do the dirty work.

Nature: Conformist

Demeanor: Deviant

Birthyear: 27 B.C.

Occupation: Priest

Physical: Strength 5 (6)*, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Appearance 0, Charisma 0, Character 0

Mental: Perception 4 (6)*, Intelligence 1, Wits 3

Virtues: All at 0

Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Intimidation 2, Search 5, Scan 4

Skills: Acrobatics 2, Climbing 3, Hunting 2, Melee 2, Orienteering 3, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Tracking 5

Knowledges: Area Knowledge (many) 3, Investigation 2

Magic Skills: Alchemy 3, Hekau 3

Background: Allies 2, Status 2, Supernatural 4

Ka: 3

Ba: 3

Sekhem: 42

Willpower: 5

* Amam is frequently under the influence of Alchemy which increases his Attributes

Masquerade

When all Mummies, except the Banes, first died, Horus visited their Ba and informed them of their immortal state. He also exacted a promise from each to hide their immortal power from mortals, lest they go mad for the power themselves. To date, Mummies have been discreet enough in their magics and their comings and goings to maintain their own Masquerade. They all know Horus' wrath is awesome to behold.

The Bane Mummies are another matter entirely. They are directed by Apophis not to grossly display their twisted forms or their powers, lest mortals wise up to the demonic evil around them and actually organize to fight it. Set, as well, instructs them to remain hidden. However, occasionally they are let out on too long of a leash on their missions of evil, and some mortal ends up raving insanely about his sighting of them, or newspaper writers find themselves rationalizing the bizarre so their editors don't call them nuts.





Characters

Amen Khal

Born and bred into the soldiery of ancient Egypt, Amen Khal served under Ramses the Great as the pharaoh's officer in the campaigns against Asia. Amen Khal's entire life was devoted to the methods of warfare, and it remains his eternal hobby. He has served practically every nation and fought in most great historical battles, as well as some that were never recorded. He often lends his military genius to the underdog of any conflict, as much for the challenge as for any sense of justice.

He has proved to be one of Horus' most trusted supporters. In times when direct action is required, Horus goes to Amen Khal to organize the necessary raid or assassination.

Amen Khal is a short, stout man with light-brown skin. He wears his gray-black hair at whatever length fits the climate. He dresses and talks like a soldier, conducts himself like a general and walks like a warrior. He is a fierce leader and brilliant tactician. The Followers of Set despise him, but they tend to let him be.

Amen is fascinated and appalled by the unprecedented pace of change in the methods of warfare since the dawning of the technological era. He fought in both World Wars, and mourns the lost days of honorable fighting and closer quarters. He fought closely with the Afghani against the Soviet invasion and saw how devastating the technological edge is in warfare.

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Director

Birthyear: 1273 B.C.

Apparent Age: 38

Occupation: Warrior

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6

Social: Appearance 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 2

Mental: Perception 4, Wits 3, Intelligence 3

Virtues: Conscience 2, Courage 5, Self-Control 3, Honor 3, Love 1, Truth 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawling 5, Diplomacy 2, Dodge 4, Instruction 2, Leadership 4

Skills: Animal Training 2, Archery 4, Artillery 4, Boat Handling 2, Camouflage 3, Carousing 1, Climbing 2, Fast-Draw 3, Firearms 4, Heavy Weapons 4, Hunting 2, Martial Arts Weapons 4, Melee 5, Stealth 2, Survival 4, Throwing 2

Knowledges: Astrology 2, History 2, Heraldry 1, Linguistics 4, Meteorology 2

Magic Skills: Amulets 2, Necromancy 1

Background: Allies 4, Contacts 3, Influence 3, Resources 2, Status 2, Supernatural 1

Ka: 7
Ba: 5
Sekhem: 27
Willpower: 8

Hetephras

Wife of Pharaoh Snefru and mother to Pharaoh Khufu, Hetephras was a powerful women of politics in ancient Egypt. Through many political twists she was able to contact the Cult of Isis and was made an immortal while Horus slept. However, she now regrets that decision, at least subconsciously.

Her life in the courts of Egypt was filled with temporal pleasures, and now, as an immortal, she vainly searches for new forms of gratification to continually excite her otherwise empty life. She is very knowledgeable of the spirit world, and can be a great help — if there's something exciting in it for her.

Hetephras is an exceedingly beautiful woman, as befits the wife of a pharaoh. She is short by modern standards, lithe of body, and has dusky skin. She frames her large, dark eyes with expertly applied cosmetics, and wears her hair free or in long braids soaked in fragrant oil.

Nature: Bon Vivant

Demeanor: Gallant



Birthyear: circa 2620 B.C.
Apparent Age: 34
Occupation: Queen
Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3
Social: Appearance 4, Charisma 3, Manipulation 4
Mental: Perception 2, Wits 3, Intelligence 4

Virtues: Conscience 2, Courage 2, Love 3, Honor 2, Self-Control 1, Truth 2

Talents: Diplomacy 3, Empathy 2, Seduction 4, Trick 2

Skills: Carousing 4, Dancing 3, Etiquette 2, Music 2, Skiing 2, Style 4

Knowledges: Anthropology 2, Architecture 2, Astrology 1, Linguistics 3, Occult 2, Spirit Lore 4

Magic Skills: Alchemy 4, Figurines 1, Hekau 1, Necromancy 1

Background: Allies 2, Fame 3, Influence 2, Resources 4, Status 1

Ka: 4

Ba: 3

Sekhem: 48

Willpower: 5

Horus, the Avenger

The history of Horus has already been discussed, but his current condition and activities deserve some mention. For the past several centuries, Horus has made the Alps of Switzerland his home. With the aid of spirits there, he is able to monitor and secure his domain from astral or physical intruders. He does not permit any Vampires into his chosen area of the Alps and even kicks them out of Switzerland whenever he can, though he avoids the Cainites of Geneva and Zurich. Horus still carries a deep-seated contempt for the Kindred since the days of Osiris and Set. He views almost all Kindred as expendable, and he views Set as an archenemy most foul.

For the past millennium, Horus has been actively engaged in organizing Mummies and his other allies to thwart the efforts of Set and his followers. However, the private war between Set and Horus has far more vital implications than just their personal vendettas. It is in reality one battle in the war of the Jihad.

Horus always appears well dressed in golden finery. He wears a jeweled patch over his missing eye and carries several amulets and figurines of varied powers. He is tall for an ancient man, standing nearly six feet, and is incredibly proportioned due to his natural physique and his magic.

In any group, Horus will automatically assume command and control those around him. He can be overbearing, but has the power and wisdom to be in command of almost anyone. He is undoubtedly the most powerful Mummy in existence.

and is one of the most instrumental players in the Jyhad. The main difference between Horus and the peers of his power level is that Horus is still quite human in many ways. He is personable and somewhat informal in conversation, quick to anger and possesses a very mortal spark of character and nobility.

Nature: Cavalier

Demeanor: Fanatic

Birthyear: ?

Apparent Age: 21

Occupation: Magician, Son of Pharaoh, God

Physical: Strength 8, Dexterity 8, Stamina 8

Social: Appearance 7, Charisma 7, Manipulation 8

Mental: Perception 8, Wits 7, Intelligence 8

Virtues: Conscience 5, Courage 5, Self-Control 5, Love 2, Honor 5, Truth 3

Talents: Many

Skills: Many

Knowledges: Many

Magic Skills: Alchemy 5, Amulets 5, Celestial 5, Figurines 5, Hekau 5, Necromancy 6 (Spell of Life is Level 6 Necromancy)

Background: Allies 5, Contacts 5, Fame 5, Influence 5, Resources 5, Retainers 3, Status 5, Supernatural 5

Ka: 10

Ba: Varies

Sekhem: 99

Willpower: 10

Sahura

Sahu was born to a family of artisans already much in favor with the pharaoh Snefru. Sahu received an extensive education as a young man and became a scribe, first in the court of Snefru and then in the court of the pharaoh's son, Khufu. Sahu became famous for his depictions of the Egyptian sun god, Ra, and the priests of the sun god honored Sahu with the title added to his name, making it Sahura.

Sahura was gaining some reputation as a man of good craftsmanship and solid character when he was struck with a fatal disease just days after receiving an honorable commission to work on the Great Pyramid. He died shortly thereafter, but not before he was visited by the Cult of Isis.

Sahura has spent most of his immortal life as a student of different cultures and different eras. He is an honest and serene man of considerable learning and wisdom.

Nature: Caregiver

Demeanor: Conformist

Birthyear: circa 2610 B.C.

Apparent Age: 32

Occupation: Scribe

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social: Appearance 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2

Mental: Perception 3, Wits 3, Intelligence 4

Virtues: Conscience 3, Courage 2, Self-Control 3, Love 3, Truth 4, Honor 4

Talents: Artistic Expression 4, Empathy 2, Poetic Expression 2, Writing 4

Skills: Debate 2, First Aid 3, Herbalism 1, Meditation 3, Pottery 2, Research 4, Speed Reading 3

Knowledges: Anthropology 2, Archaeology 3, Architecture 2, Astronomy 3, Cryptography 2, Faerie Lore 2, Heraldry 3, History 5, Kindred Lore 2, Law 2, Linguistics 5, Literature 3, Politics 3, Theology 2

Magic Skills: Alchemy 1, Amulets 2, Celestial 1, Figurines 3, Necromancy 1

Background: Contacts 2, Resources 4, Status 2, Supernatural 2

Ka: 6

Ba: 2

Sekhem: 36

Willpower: 7

Story Seeds

If the Storyteller allows players to select different kinds of characters, she may be faced with the seemingly difficult task of having to consistently integrate Mummies and Vampires or Mummies and Werewolves into the Chronicle. Developing stories of interest to both character types may seem awkward at first, but the character types actually have many similar interests at heart. For example, all character types are involved in the machinations of the Jyhad, and all three types will generally oppose the Followers of Set.

After a few storylines which mutually interest the character types, the characters will begin to form their own bonds which tend to carry them through further stories. Common enemies or the trading of favors with one another strengthen the character relationships enough that the Chronicle should run smoothly.

To help give the Storyteller a mental jump start on Story plotlines involving Mummies, a feature Story is provided in the following chapter. Also, the following Story sketches are provided. These ideas may only be a subplot in the Chronicle, or might serve as an outline for a plotline involving several stories.

1. Amen Khal (see Characters, above) requests the aid of the Mummy character(s). He has been asked by Horus to investigate Setite activity in a city near the Mummy characters (perhaps the resident city of any Vampire characters).

A number of Setites have recently come to the city with an interest in creating Bane Mummies as their servants. Possessing only fragmentary knowledge of the ritual Set used those many centuries ago, they have begun their own experiments, but find they need Kindred blood to continue. Rather than risk their own *vita* or create Neonate Setites for the sole purpose of research, they have taken to kidnapping.

This Story should require a great deal of cooperation between the Mummies and Vampires, with the Mummies probably having to rescue the Vampire characters from the Setites' grasp. It should also make all the characters undying enemies of the Followers of Set.

2. An aging genealogist has serendipitously put clues (handwriting, portraits, birth certificates, name references, fables) together and discovered the character's immortality. The genealogist threatens to reveal the character to the world unless he grants the old man immortality. The genealogist is sure to have laid clues in various safety deposit boxes to be opened if he "accidentally" dies, to prevent the character from heartlessly offing him. The character will have to be devious. The old genealogist might be convinced that the character cannot grant others the immortality which he enjoys, and be further placated with stories of ancient history. Perhaps the character could even cure the ailing genealogist and at least extend the man's life.

3. The Mummy character is visited by the Ba of a dead peer. The character's friend has had her tomb robbed and her body despoiled. The dead Mummy asks the character to retrieve the body from whatever irreverent disposal the tomb robber made of it. Additionally, the character will have to hunt down the amulets and potions taken from the Mummy's tomb. Some of these items might have already gone to private collectors who don't appreciate the owners coming to reclaim them.

4. A character dreams of a human-headed hawk (traditional symbol of a Ba or a messenger) flying to the character. Emotions of fear and urgency accompany the dream. The hawk is plucked from flight and swallowed in the large maw of demon before reaching the character.

After a few nights of the same dream, a duffel bag is delivered to the character's residence. The bag was misplaced during an airline flight, and the airline is now delivering it to the address marked on the luggage tags — the character's address. The name on the bag is that of an Arabic woman and one of the last names used by the character in a former life. Along with a woman's robes and sandals, the bag contains a scroll said to mark the location where the ruins of the Library of Alexandria can be found, and also a heart wrapped in black cloth, pickled in a jar.

The character's granddaughter or perhaps great-granddaughter has spent her life exploring the character's existence and has discovered the character's identity and whereabouts. Her investigations embroiled her in the affairs of the Setites, who tried to seduce her into their fold, but she fled from them, taking one of their hearts (see *The Players*

Guide). She never made it to the character and was abducted and killed by Amam the Devourer, along with mortal minions of the Setites. Her luggage, however, was misplaced by the airline and is only now arriving to the character.

Amam will not rest until he has recovered the heart and the scroll. The scroll may prove to be genuine or not.

5. A good Story for Vampires and Mummies is tracking down someone (mortal, Kindred or Mummy) who has been branded with the Mark of Damnation (Level Ten Serpentis). Tremere Elders want the unfortunate brought to them to cure him. What does the branded one know, or what did he discover that made Set curse him? Why do the Tremere Elders want to help him — is it out of the sheer goodness of their hearts? (Not!?)

Glossary of Names

The following list of names is taken directly from the indexes of the books referenced in the bibliography. The names include objects, people, gods, and places. The list is intended to provide the flavor of Egyptian names, so you can create your own.

Abydos
Achoris
Ahmosis
Akhenaton
Amarna
Amenemhat
Amenhetep
Amon-Ra
Anubis
Anzti
Apophis or Apes
Ashur
Ashurbanipal
Aswan
Asyut
Athribis
Aton
Atom
Avaris
Bast
Bubastis
Busiris
Buto
Byblus
Cambyses
Cheops

Chephren	Onuris
Cleopatra	Osiris
Dahshur	Pepi
Dedefra	Piankni
Dendera	Psammetichus
Ecbatana	Ptah
Edfu	Ra
El-Amarna	Ra-Atum
Geb	Ramses
Haapi	Rekhmara
Hamanth	Sahura
Hathor	Sais
Hathshepsut	Sakkara
Hatti	Saru
Hawara	Sebek
Hesira	Sekenenra
Hetephras	Sekhmet
Horus	Senmut
Illahun	Serdab
Imhotep	Seshat
Isis	Sesostris
Karnak	Seth
Kenbet	Seti
Khentamenti	Shabaka
Kheti	Shalmaneser
Khnum	Shashank
Khonsu	Shepseskaf
Koptos	Shu
Luxor	Shubad
Mendes	Smenkhara
Mentuhetep	Snofru
Merenra	Sokaris
Merikara	Sopdu
Min	Taharka
Mineptah	Tammuz
Montu	Tanis
Mut	Tefnakht
Mutemuaya	Teos
Naharina	Thebes
Napata	Thoth
Nefertari	Tura
Nefertiti	Tushratta
Nekhebet	Tutankhamon
Nephthys	Tuthmosis

Userkaf
Ushabti
Weni
Xerxes
Zazat
Zoser

Bibliography

The emphasis of this supplement is to bring Mummies into the modern world, our world. They have lived throughout history, and most of them have not clung doggedly to the culture of ancient Egypt as Mestha has. Yet, in small ways, they retain idiosyncrasies and habits of thought and behavior that are throwbacks to ancient Egypt. So, since it is beyond the scope of this supplement to brief the Storyteller on the customs of ancient Egypt, let me encourage you to pick up one or two books on the subject and skim them for insight. Your storytelling will certainly profit from the infusion of rich detail, and the bargain is you learn a lot in the process. I sure have writing this book.

The following sources have been most beneficial to me:

Budge, E.A. Wallis, *Egyptian Magic*, 1901 original, 1971 by Dover Publications. Excellent source of anecdotes and Egyptian tales of magic use.

Budge, E.A. Wallis, *The Book of the Dead*, 1899 original, 1989 by Arkana. Superb resource for a Mummy player. Contains complete litanies which can be acted out as spell incantations by the player.

Fakhry, Ahmed, *The Pyramids*, copyright 1961, published by University of Chicago Press. A storehouse of facts and diagrams on the architecture of ancient Egypt. A bit scholarly in style, but still good reading.

Macaulay, David, *Pyramid*, 1975 copyright, published by Houghton Mifflin Company of Boston. Illustrated story book showing step-by-step construction of a pyramid.

White, J.E. Manchip, *Ancient Egypt — Its Culture and History*, copyright 1970, Dover Publications of New York. This is a well-written resource of culture and history. It's one of the most entertainingly written history books that I've come across.

Also, let me slip in a quick reference here to a very good roleplaying publication put out by another gaming company.

Wajenburg, Earl, *Mythic Egypt*, copyright 1990 by Iron Crown Enterprises (I.C.E.). This is a good source of information on ancient Egypt that is already assembled and summarized in a roleplaying format. You could easily pull information out of it to run a parallel storyline in ancient Egypt for an adventure or two.



Chapter Five: Hell's Highway

*Going down
By that time
My friends are gonna be there too
I'm on the highway to hell*

— AC/DC, *Highway to Hell*

Storyteller's Synopsis

This Story is designed to introduce players to running Mummy characters. It is assumed all of the characters will be Mummies, although other types could be worked in by the Storyteller. Hell's Highway also helps the players explore some of their newly created characters' past lives and experiences through a flashback.

The story begins with the assumption that the characters, all being Mummies, know each other and are reasonably good friends, or at least find one another interesting enough to visit once a century. Throughout history, the characters have habitually gathered together with their mutual friend Khonseru (a fellow Mummy and a character played by the Storyteller) approximately every 100 years. Together with Khonseru, the characters all have a rousing good time, partying and finding something dangerous in which to embroil themselves.

The 1990s prove to be no exception, with the characters already gathering in the United States, where Khonseru has promised to take them all on a road trip, guaranteeing them a hell of a good time. The characters meet, and while cruising down the freeway toward their unknown destination, begin talking about old times. At these points in the story, the Storyteller will break from the present to flash back to one of the characters' earlier get-togethers centuries before. Once

the historical party scene has been played out, the Storyteller can return the Story to the present and the road. After a few such flashbacks, during which the players get to develop their characters' history, the road trip ends. The characters exit off of the freeway in a spiritual journey toward Hell, for another "fun" romp with Khonseru.

Khonseru has discovered a breach in Gaia, the Earth Mother, which a demon is trying to exploit and turn into a gateway connected to his home spirit world—Hell. Khonseru has accepted the job of closing down the construction of the gateway and has brought the characters along to help (what are friends for?).

Every Storyteller has their own style, so while no one can dictate how to run the gaming group, setting a certain mood during the Story can make it even more interesting. The old *Twilight Zone* shows, which often got their eerie feel from taking mundane people in normal settings and interjecting someone who also appeared normal but was actually an alien, angel or other supernatural being, are examples of one way to handle the mood.

This story has a similar feel in that it will contain a lot of normal events and normal people, but it also contains the characters, supernatural forces pretending to be normal. The Story begins with purely mundane events and builds toward a climax by interjecting more and more supernatural happenings, until the bizarre climax—the trip onto hell's highway.

Khonseru (Bacchus the Beggar)

Khonseru was born in ancient Thebes and abandoned to the streets by his mother. As a babe, Khonseru was cared for by a kind, but old and senile, lady he scarcely remembers. She died when Khonseru was five, leaving him to fend for himself as a beggar and thief in the city of Thebes. He fared remarkably well, developing a vast repertoire of sad stories, money scams and pick pocketing techniques.

That the likes of Khonseru ever received the Ritual of Life must have been a point of pride with Set, showing how deeply he had corrupted the Cult of Isis and their selection criteria, but the cult had the last laugh, because Khonseru has proved himself to be a bizarre but honorable immortal jester. Not only has he been a willing pawn in Horus' plans against the Setites, but he has also taken the initiative on several occasions to befuddle the Setites or render some service to the spirits.

Khonseru/Bacchus is 1.7m (5'6") tall and has a beefy frame. His skin is lightly colored for an Egyptian, but his hair and eyes are dark black and brown. He always dresses comfortably in cheap and well-worn clothes. In the States, he prefers faded denim jeans, a black leather jacket covering a t-shirt, dark shades and a neck bandanna.

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Jester



Birthyear: 1191 B.C.

Occupation: Beggar

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Appearance 2, Charisma 4, Manipulation 4

Mental: Perception 3, Wits 4, Intelligence 3

Virtues: Conscience 2, Courage 4, Self-Control 2, Love 2, Honor 3, Truth 3

Talents: Acting 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Scrounging 5, Streetwise 3, Trick 3

Skills: Bribery 2, Carousing 4, Disguise 2, Drive 3, Fast-Talk 3, Gambling 1, Lockpicking 2, Pickpocket 4, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Astronomy 1, Occult 1, Spirit Lore 3

Magic Skills: Amulets 2, Celestial 1, Necromancy 1

Background: Allies 2, Contacts 4, Fame 2, Status 3, Supernatural 3 Ka: 6

Ba: 8

Sekhem: 16

Willpower: 7

Roleplaying Hints: Playing Bacchus, as you prefer to be called, is the key to setting the pace of the story. As long as things are moving along and everyone's having a good time, you'll be pretty quiet, but as soon as conversation lulls, you do or say something incredibly offbeat and crazy. Ask nonsense questions (*Why's a dime smaller than a penny if it's worth more?*), interrupt someone with a primal scream or direct incredibly personal questions to one of the characters.

You have a tendency to lie about unimportant details for absolutely no reason: if there's a reason to lie then be honest. You still have a habit of asking for things like money or other kinds of help. You lead into your begging by asking a lot of questions which evoke "yes" responses before popping the real plea for small change.

Despite all these idiosyncrasies, you are very sane and very crafty. Once in a while you will sheepishly grin after performing some lunacy, showing that you knew what you were doing all along. You can be serious, courageous and honest when the situation demands it, but do enjoy breaking stressful situations by acting the jester.

Scene One: Arrival

Bacchus will contact all of the characters and ask them to meet at Sun Valley Inn, a cheap motel just off of Interstate-40 on the western side of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Bacchus won't reveal much about his plans, except to say that he's got this century's festivities all planned and that they'll be taking a bit of a road trip.

The Sun Valley Inn is a seedy dive where the management doesn't I.D. young couples and never calls the police. In the summer, the temperature is 100 plus degrees during the day

and every cubicle has a window-mounted air conditioner laboring to keep the dirty little rooms cool. Bacchus has already reserved, but not paid for, Room Six.

Bacchus will arrive a little after 7 p.m., more or less on schedule. He drives a Ford Thunderbird with a modified engine that idles like echoing thunder. The body of the T-Bird is painted a dull black-gray and all of the windows are tinted, but not quite opaque. Bacchus is decked out in denim and leather and puffs a cigarette with carcinogenic pleasure.

If the characters don't come outside at the sound of the engine, he'll blast the horn a couple of times. When the characters are outside, he'll hop out and shake hands, smiling and laughing at the way they're dressed or how they haven't changed much. He'll get everyone to pile into the Thunderbird, throwing luggage in the trunk, and then take off. If there are too many characters to fit into a T-Bird, Bacchus will arrive in a garishly painted van with a number of rows of seats.

If anyone asks where they're going, he'll say toward Flagstaff. He does indeed get onto the Interstate and head west toward Flagstaff, Arizona, which mileage signs show as 300+ miles away.

Suggestions for Playing the Scene

Away from the gaming table, set up two rows of chairs arranged like car seats. Anytime the story is taking place in the car, move the group over to the chairs and roleplay the scenes as live action. When the story is into a flashback or you may require dice rolling, move back to the gaming table.

It helps to have a few costume props, such as a jacket and shades, for when you take the role of Bacchus and go to the driver's seat of the "car." Your players will tend to follow your lead on acting out the live-action car scenes, so ham it up some by playing Bacchus to the hilt as cool and crazy. Miming around the car (opening the door, turning the key, steering, etc.) will also encourage the players to get into the swing of the live-action scenes. You may think of other props as well, such as a cassette player to serve as a car radio (you can even customize a tape to include a bizarre assortment of music, plus occasional newscasts which, among other stories, mentions a drive-by shooting at a rest stop on I-40 — only the latest in a rash of violence along the freeway).

Scene Two: On the Road

The Interstate is warm and arid, with occasional cool breezes felt through the open windows of the T-Bird as the sun sets. On into the night, the air turns cold as the desert cools off. The traffic on the Interstate is light, and should become sparser as the ride continues, until the highway is desolate.

Once the characters give up trying to get information out of Bacchus as to where they're going or why they're going there, turn the conversation back to the old times. Bacchus

will start by asking the characters what they've been doing since they last met in the gay 1890s. The players may have to come up with some impromptu answers.

At certain points along the ride, introduce the two flashback scenes and then roleplay them out. See below for tips on running the flashbacks. In between flashbacks, feel free to interject some ordinary events like the two examples below.

1. Gas Stop — Some time into the trip, Bacchus will begin his pitch to one of the characters for money by leading into it with "yes" questions. *Would you give a person dying of thirst some water? You manage to keep a life of luxury don't you? Would you give a man some money if he promised to buy his family food? etc.* until he pulls into a gas station / minimarket where he'll pop the real question — *Will ya give me a \$20 for gas and munchies?* Twenty bucks is nothing to most Mummy characters, but the point is how irritating Bacchus can be by belaboring a point before he asks. Even if characters offer him the money to shut him up, he'll decline, seemingly insulted that they think he's still a beggar. After he's quiet for a minute and conversation has turned to something else, he'll begin asking again.

He'll get a character to pump the gas while he goes into the store and loads up on junk food. As a live action prop, you might bring out a bag of junk food when you (Bacchus) return to the "car." Again, the stranger the selection the better — Yoo-Hoos, grape soda, pork rinds, Zingers™, etc. Bacchus will get someone else to drive as the trip continues.

2. Leadfoot — As soon as another character is driving, Bacchus will be on them to drive faster, no matter how fast the character goes. The T-Bird becomes very difficult to handle at 120 mph. After a few Drive or Dexterity rolls, an unmarked police car will blur by going the other way and then turn its lights on before making a U-turn to follow the characters.

It's up to the driver as to what to do, but try to avoid getting the characters into a full-fledged chase that might result in roadblocks and a disruption of the Story — better to let them lose the police pursuit. If the character stops to take his medicine, ask one of the other players to assume the role of the state trooper and privately coach the player into giving the driver a lot of grief.

Flashbacks

Presented below is a flashback scene. It is intended to be kept rather short and specific, since no real historical background is given for the era involved. Bacchus will introduce the scene while driving toward Flagstaff with some comment like those listed at the beginning of each section.

It's up to the Storyteller and players how the flashback rolls out. In the playtest of this Story, the flashback scenes became pretty crazy, filled with dark humor. Also in the playtest, one of the players got the hang of shifting into the flashbacks and suggested another flashback during the live-

action driving by making a friendly cutdown at another character's expense. The group went with it and played out the scene spontaneously (it keeps the Storyteller busy). The scene turned out to be a lot of fun due to the player involvement. The point is feel free to add more flashbacks and let the players do most of the creating.

Guillotine Graves

Remember the time the Gauls offed poor Serentu's head, and we had to dig it up for him? That old quack came out and hit (a character's name) with the shovel.

A. The Tavern

The year is 1783. It's the middle of the French Revolution, and the characters are gathering at a tavern in the middle of Paris. Most of the city is celebrating the overthrow of the nobility, so the streets are already in a festive mood as the characters come together for their centennial party.

As one of the characters approaches the tavern through an alley, the Ka spirit of the Mummy Serentu manifests before him. The character knows Serentu on a casual level. He was a merchant in ancient Egypt and has spent much of his immortal life with a passion for material things. Serentu will explain that he was "*mistaken as one of the heartless nobility*" and guillotined along with all of the others executed by the mobs. He can demonstrate by grabbing his own hair and lifting the head of his Ka form up from his neck and then replacing it. He had been buried in a mass grave south of Paris where his body will quickly rot to nothing. He will have to spend ages in the spirit world to reform his body unless the character helps. Will he go and dig up Serentu's body and head and bury it properly with the preservation rituals? Serentu gives directions to the graveyard and pleads for help as his Ka fades away.

In the tavern, Bacchus is dressed in the tattered clothes of a beggar adorned with patches of jewelry and boots obviously stolen from a noble's household. He is already well into the ale as the characters arrive. Bacchus will laugh at Serentu's plight, but he is all for helping the "*poor dead bastard out of the rotting hole.*"

B. The Graveyard

The mass grave site sits around the base of a hill south of Paris. During the day, wagons carrying the dead come to drop off their cargo, but at night it is almost deserted. The graveyard caretaker lives in a cottage at the edge of the grounds. He spends his time tending the plots of the properly buried dead, and has given little notice to the mass grave pits that have become the final rest for the guillotine victims. The old man, Gregory, has even let a medical student come at night to collect cadaver pieces for study. If the characters arrive at

night, Gregory's cottage will be dark. The two mass grave pits are covered with a mound of wet soil that will take two hours to dig through.

As the characters arrive at the mass graves, Serentu's Ka will appear and thank all of the players for coming to rescue him. He instructs them in which of the two mounds to dig. He then begins a monologue of how dreadful these nobles are when they are dead. They just can't handle the experience. Their ghosts whine around, getting in the way, too stupid and confused to pass along. "*You should thank me that I've kept them from manifesting and bothering you.*"

As the digging continues, a rain begins to fall, turning the soil to mud, until the characters are swimming in a mud bath of corpses and burlap sacks filled with heads. Serentu will confess that he doesn't have a firm idea where exactly his body is, what with all of the ghosts bothering him and his head and body separated. An Alertness + Stamina roll against difficulty 9 is required to chum through the mud long enough to find the right body. None of the head sacks have Serentu's head.

About this time, Gregory appears. As ordained at the beginning of the flashback, he swats a character with his shovel and demands to know what they're doing here. "*You weren't supposed to come again until tomorrow night. Any fool knows it was going to rain tonight. See what you've done to the place, bodies everywhere, and where's my silver?*"

Gregory is a crotchety old French man who doesn't appreciate the interruption. He was expecting the Paris medical student and her hired hands tomorrow night to collect more cadavers. Through bribery or intimidation, the characters may be able to get out the truth about the medical student, including the woman's name, out of old Gregory. The medical student has indeed taken Serentu's head.

C. Anatomy Studies

The medical student is Janette Lobue, daughter of a wealthy and eccentric English diplomat to France. She studied medicine in Paris until the professors' stupidity regarding her sex forbade her from continuing her studies beyond a nursing level. She began her own research to spite the university. With the help of a few hired hands, Janette has been collecting cadavers and dissecting them in the cellar of her Paris flat.

The characters will have to do crank out the Streetwise, Investigation or Area Knowledge Abilities to track down Janette. They may also opt to wait for her the following night at the graveyard and confront her or follow her home.

Regardless, Janette will do her best to deny everything since robbing graves, even of nobles, is not a popular activity, especially for a lady of society. The characters may press her with evidence and make a deal to get Serentu's head back (it is already partially dissected, much to Serentu's dismay). Janette may even comment on how small the brain cavity is, how developed the tongue musculature, etc.

If the characters try to force their way around Janette's house, they will have to tussle with the hired hands who just happen to be around.

The flashback can be wrapped once Serentu has been put back together, or after the characters have reburied him.

After all of the flashbacks and road events you choose to play are done, the characters will approach a Rest Area along I-40. Go to Scene Four and play through the climax of the Story.

Scene Three: Hell's Highway

As the group begins to approach a rest stop just off the interstate, Bacchus will have the driver pull over to the shoulder and stop. Bacchus will then explain why he has brought the characters here and ask for their help. He explains that when he was dead a few years ago, his Ba met the traveling spirit of a Zuni Indian mystic. The Indian instructed Bacchus in a means to rejuvenate his spirit energy (regain Ba) and in return, Bacchus agreed to investigate a scar in the spirit world near the Zuni Indian reservation.

Bacchus has investigated the spirit world phenomenon enough to be disturbed by what he sees. At a point along I-40 north of the Indian reservation, a demon has found a breach in the spirit world fabric of Gaia, the Earth Mother. He has been exploiting the breach and seeking to build a connection

between the physical world and his home spirit world of Tuat, one name for the Egyptian concept of Hell. The demon, whose true name is Karamemti, has caused a rash of murderous violence to occur at the rest stop and along the nearby stretch of I-40 in order to further poison the spirit world and build the growing connection. Bacchus wants to enter the spirit world and find a way to stop Karamemti from completing construction of the gateway.

The Exit

If the characters agree to help, Bacchus will pull out an amulet, wrap its leather thong around the rear-view mirror and activate the amulet. All of the character's Ka spirits will be pulled from their physical bodies and their conscious perceptions will shift to the spirit world. They will be seated in a blurry but operational spiritual facsimile of the Thunderbird. Bacchus will point ahead and ask the driver to continue onto the exit slowly.

In the spirit world, the interstate is an ebony ribbon which lays on the ground and seems to crush the desert soil. The ground on the sides of the road is cracked and parched. A thin oil film constantly drains off of the road and dribbles into the cracks in the ground. Ahead on the road the rest stop has disappeared and in its place is a regular interstate exit ramp with a sign reading "Route 666 to Tuat," with an orange sticker across it reading "Under Construction".



Along the exit, there are ghost scenes of the murders and violence Karamemti has instigated here near the interstate. While the actual ghosts of the dead will be found later as Karamemti's construction crew, there is enough psychic residue still on the scene to cause the murderous actions to play back in spectral reenactments. Nothing of what happens in these scenes can be affected by the characters.

The content of the scenes is for each Storyteller to decide depending on the maturity of the gaming group. The purpose is to let the players know that their characters have entered into a setting and events influenced by realms of evil — this is no fantasy romp to slay a demon. The scenes portray ordinary people out of control, performing acts of violent rage and the descriptions should be just a bit shocking. Possible scenes could include:

- A man changing a tire on a family car. A truck driver stops to help, the two men begin to argue over how to remove the lug nuts and the father kills the truck driver with the tire iron.
- A hitchhiker waiting at the rest stop asks for a ride from a stopped car. The driver pulls a pistol from the glove compartment and shoots, then gets out of the car to keep shooting the fallen hiker.
- A state trooper (perhaps the one who stopped the characters) pulls into the rest stop and discovers two young teenagers parking and making out. He clubs the boy to death.

Again, the point is to shock a little bit, so know your gaming group and use your discretion. Once the characters exit I-40 onto Route 666, Hell's Highway, they will leave the scenes behind.

Tollbooth

Once off I-40, a short stretch of road leads up to a rickety shack of a tollbooth set between two lanes. Crossbars block off both lanes and red-green traffic lights show that the lanes are open. A loathsome little demon sits in the booth. His true name is Khemsu, and he serves Karamemti. Khemsu wears a uniform of sorts under which his body continuously oozes about, causing the clothing to ripple and bulge obscenely.

When the characters stop at the booth, he will tell them to pay the toll. If asked, he will explain the toll must be paid in each of three virtues: Compassion (Conscience), Faith (Honor), and Love. Every group wanting to ride Route 666 has to pay the toll. He will ask who is going to pay the toll of Compassion.

Paying the three tolls requires the players to pool their resources. They must select someone to pay the toll for each virtue. The same character can be selected for none to all of the three tests. Once someone volunteers to pay one of the Virtue tolls, Khemsu uses the power of the tollbooth icon to send the character into a vivid daydream wherein the character is tested for that virtue.

If the character roleplays an obvious failure to the daydream test (i.e. succumbs to Khemsu's temptation) then no roll is necessary — it's an automatic failure. If the character roleplays virtuously, he must still pass a Virtue roll against difficulty 7 (possibly adjusted up or down depending on the roleplaying outcome) for the Virtue being tested. Two or more successes indicate Khemsu is frustrated by the character's shining resolve. One success is still good enough, but the character will be plagued by doubts about that Virtue, doubts which may cause penalties to future tests against that Virtue as the character recalls his near temptation. A failure indicates the character will carry serious doubts about the Virtue for some time, and also loses a point in that Virtue.

Khemsu will be very amused as memories rich with the lost Virtue flash before the character's eyes and are then forgotten forever. For example, a character fails the toll of love and remembers moments of pure love shared with a spouse from a previous life. The memories flood by and are gone forever. With them go the enriching experiences that gave the character a higher rating in the Virtue of Love. Whether the character passes or fails the test, the toll for that Virtue is paid.

Below are suggested tests for each Virtue. The characters will quickly discover that Khemsu doesn't play fair. The "rules" of the game are specific and the characters had better catch on quickly. Khemsu is bound to accurately answer all questions about the tolls, except, of course, how to answer them.

Compassion (Conscience) — The character is wandering the overcrowded, sewage-filled streets of Calcutta. Refuse and excrement fill the alleys, and everywhere people are starving and disease-stricken as famine has struck the Indian city. The character comes upon a group of starving children. The character holds in her hands a small loaf of bread. She can divide the loaf among all of the children, with each getting enough to ease their hunger but not enough to survive the famine, or she can feed one child the entire loaf and he will survive. What does she do?

Here Khemsu is trying to trap the character into an either/or answer between only two options, and is also trying to confuse the character between Compassion and Courage. It takes courage and truth to let most of the children starve and save one, but a purely compassionate answer is to comfort them all. It's a very fine line between the virtues, but the test is of Compassion not Courage, and the correct answer is to help all of the children. Just saving one child is an automatic failure.

Faith (Honor) — The character is an American soldier in the Vietnam war. His squad is on an advanced search-and-destroy mission to demolish a Viet Cong munitions stockpile. The character's commander orders the character to advance to the village near the stockpile and eliminate anyone and everyone there, while the rest of the squad flanks to the munitions. The character advances to the jungle and

comes upon the village. In the distance sits the munitions bunker. Six women and children rest in the shade around the tiny village. What does the character do?

Again, Khemsu is playing on the character's feelings, trying to blind him from the tested Virtue by putting him in a situation that normally calls for the tested Virtue of Honor to be overpowered by virtues of Compassion. If the character does not kill the villagers, he will see his squad move towards the bunker. The women and children will pull out weapons and start slaughtering the squad in a crossfire — the character has automatically failed.

Holding the villagers at gunpoint should give the character a chance to test the Virtue. Killing them, as heinous as it is, is the correct option and should earn the character a bonus to his difficulty number on the test. Remember that Honor is about Faith in one's groups, leaders and institutions, as well as loyalty to them.

Love — The character walks through the streets of his city, an ancient Persian city-state he rules. The people cheer and adore him, for he is a kind and benevolent prince. He boards a riverboat with his entourage and sails to a neighboring city-state to visit the court of its king. The two city-states are close to war, and there are hopes to find peace.

At the court, the character is wined and dined by the other royal household. Across the room at dinner he sees a daughter of the king. She is strikingly beautiful; her dark eyes stare back at the character — the attraction is palpable between the two though no words are spoken. (Note that the sex of the vision personalities can change depending on the character's preferences). The character learns that she is promised to a noble of another city-state, a despicable man and a tyrannical ruler. The character prepares to leave the court after striking an uneasy peace with the king. As the character begins to board his riverboat, the princess appears. She professes to love the character, repeating how handsome and brave he appears. Will he take her with him, even though it could cause one or two city-states to war against the character's city?

The test is a version of the Helen of Troy myth. Khemsu hopes to confuse the character between love and lust. The character is led to believe that love is represented by the relationship with the princess, though it is just lust. The love being tested is between the character and his people.

In describing the vision, the Storyteller should repeatedly yet subtly stress how beautiful the princess is, saying little about her beyond her appearance, whereas the character's people openly cherish the character, their ruler. They love their prince and he has been loving to them. If the character chooses to return with the princess, he is putting lust for her above the love of his people, who will suffer greatly in the ensuing war. The best option, which might lower the difficulty of the Virtue test, is to turn away from her and leave. Other outcomes would adjust the test difficulty as the Storyteller sees fit.



Once all three tolls have been paid, the crossbar will raise to allow the characters to drive through the gate and onto Route 666. The road beyond the toll booth is pock-marked with potholes, the concrete is scorched and cracked, and the terrain beside the road is so dry, barren and hot that flames erupt from it spontaneously.

If the characters say to hell with the tolls (literally), and attack Khemu, they will find him a most pathetic opponent. Khemu has a Willpower of 2. For quick and dirty spirit combat, compare the character's Ka rating with Khemu's Willpower in a resisted test. The winner's successes represent points of damage to the Willpower or Ka rating. However, even with Khemu gone, the toll booth will not allow the characters to pass. Another demon will appear shortly to assume the role of toll collector.

Scene Four: The Construction Crew

The characters will have about a 20-minute drive ahead of them once they pass the toll. It is difficult to go fast on the pock-marked highway, and the screams and scamperings of unsightly creatures barely visible on the horizon tend to distract the driver and passengers. The highway is otherwise featureless except for occasional road signs proclaiming "Route 666" or mileage signs: "Tuat 12/Dis 95".

At some point during the drive, a huge cement truck will come barreling up from behind the characters' car, skimming over the broken road as though the potholes didn't exist. Any passenger or the driver must pass a Perception + Alertness roll against difficulty 8 to notice the truck, and then the driver must make a Wits + Drive test against difficulty 7 to swerve to the shoulder and let it pass. A collision with the truck or swerving off the shoulder into the flaming fields will disrupt the car and injure the characters — each loses one point of Ka. They will have to continue on foot.

Abruptly, Route 666 ends. At its end point, all of the ghosts of the mortals who died through the rest stop violence are chained together in leg irons and work with picks at breaking up the soil ahead of the road's leading edge, or shovel and smooth wet concrete into place on the road. The wet concrete pours from the mixing truck's back slide, oozing onto the ground in a bubbling syrup. Occasionally faces form in the substance, contort with pain or longing, and flow away.

Three lesser demons, each with a Willpower of three, manage the work crew. One works the controls of the truck, while the other two take turns whipping the shovelers or streaming a litany of curses and patronizing satire at the pickers. The foreman demon with the shovelers constantly reminds them that they are stuck in hell with no chance of getting to heaven. The pickers look miserable and the shovelers are in constant pain from the lashings. The demon manning the truck controls mumbles "*One part misery, two parts pain*".

Exactly how the characters choose to handle the situation is open. The demon foreman will talk to the characters, ask them to help out — *"Here, just slip this shackle on and grab a shovel. It's fun, no, really it is."* — or generally let the characters be as long as they don't interrupt. The cement mixer constantly mumbles the formula for the gateway construction, so that he and his fellows don't forget it.

The characters may simply squash the foreman and free the ghosts, or do something more creative, like tossing the demons into the wet concrete. At some point Karamemti will show up personally, sensing the disruption caused by the characters. His form rapidly shifts and transforms from a humanoid crocodile to a fiery-skinned devil to a mass of writhing serpents and on and on to 100 different forms. He will rage and bluster at the characters. *"Do you know who I am, you sons of jackals? I am the Despoiler of the Dead, the Lord of Rot. I am the worm that feasts upon the dead pharaoh's eye so that he sees only hell for all eternity. You have interrupted my work and must make compensation."*

Karamemti has a Willpower of eight, and can summon six malign spirits with Willpowers of three to do his bidding if necessary. He will not immediately resort to violence, hoping instead to trick or intimidate the characters into servitude rather than destroying their Ka spirits.

Karamemti will challenge the characters to a contest of names. Before the contest, he will negotiate the terms of the contest with the characters. You can roleplay the negotiation.



or roll dice, or do both. The roll is Wits + Haggling and is a resisted test between the highest character rating and Karamemti's rating of five.

Karamemti will be negotiating for such things as service from the characters to help build the road, or at the very least that they go away and leave the demon's project alone. The service might last anywhere from eternity to a year, or maybe until the highway's completion, depending on how well the haggling goes for Karamemti. The characters will want to negotiate for such things as canceling the construction, tearing up the road, binding Karamemti not to cause more rages along I-40, etc. It's up to the players to set forth their demands as they haggle.

Once the haggling is complete, and both sides have ironed out what they get if they win the contest of names, Karamemti will begin. The test of names relies upon the characters' skill at Hekau Magic, which is a measure of how many true names they know and how well they can use them. The characters can pool their Hekau scores together into one rating (maximum of five) for purposes of the contest. The Storyteller should "cheat" in assigning Karamemti a Hekau score depending on the characters' total. Making it one less than the character's total is generally a good idea, but no less than a two.

The contest involves naming opposing forces to one-up the other side. For example, Karamemti might begin by naming a crocodile, then the characters return by naming an elephant which could crush the crocodile, then Karamemti returns by naming drought which kills the elephant, and the characters return with the true name of water which cancels thirst, etc. The contest can last as long as it stays interesting.

You may decide to forget the dice and roleplay the entire contest, but if you want to prevent any potential confusion or squabbling over what beats what, you can regulate the contest with the following dice method. Karamemti's first turn is free — he can name anything — and will usually start small (perhaps a rat) to feel the characters out. The characters then come back with an opposing name, which the Storyteller can judge for cleverness and modify difficulty numbers accordingly. The first round starts at a base difficulty number of 4 for both the characters' first repartee and Karamemti's first counter. The naming side rolls their Hekau total against the difficulty and needs at least one success, or they have lost. The entire contest is a sustained test. The first side to accumulate a total of 20 successes wins (adjust the number for a longer or shorter contest).

In the playtest, the characters were quite clever. To overcome a naming of death, they named rebirth of the body (as it relates to Mummies' immortality). It was a very weak comeback so they got a difficulty number penalty for that counter but still passed the Hekau test). They had sprung a trap for Karamemti, who proudly boasted his own true name as the Lord of Rot who dissolves dead bodies before

they can be reborn. The characters then interrupted the contest to intimidate Karamemti with the knowledge of his true name.

Note that the characters don't necessarily have to know a Hekau spell containing the true name of the item they use in the contest, nor can they remember the names used to use them again later (Karamemti's slip-up in the playtest being an exception). After all, Hekau magic requires not only knowledge of pronunciation, but also a realization of how the name fits the whole. This cannot be gained in a few short minutes.

Aftermath

If the characters lose the contest of names, they will most likely be joining the chain gang on Hell's Highway for some time. The characters may leave the Chronicle for a while, or the Storyteller may dream up a "prison break" Story for them.

Assuming the characters win the contest against Karamemti, construction will be closed down, and the characters can bring the mortal ghost laborers back out of the highway where they will quickly vanish to higher spirit worlds. The story is over, for now. Karamemti, the Lord of Rot, is not a good enemy for Mummies to have, seeing how they die a lot and have to keep their corpses in good shape. The spurned and embarrassed demon will no doubt be back again.



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